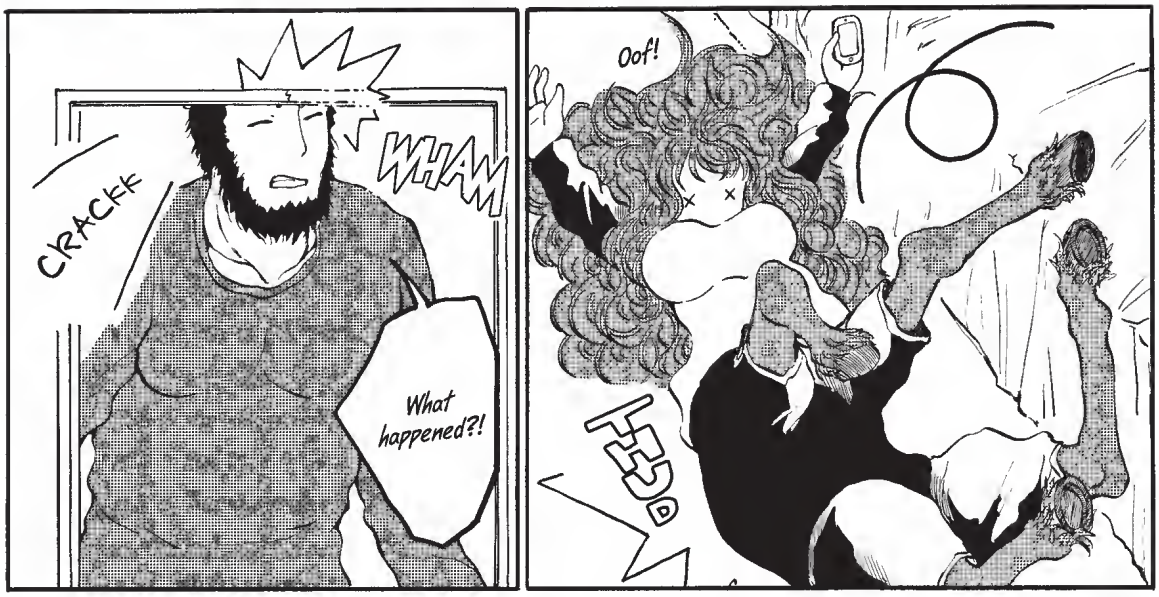
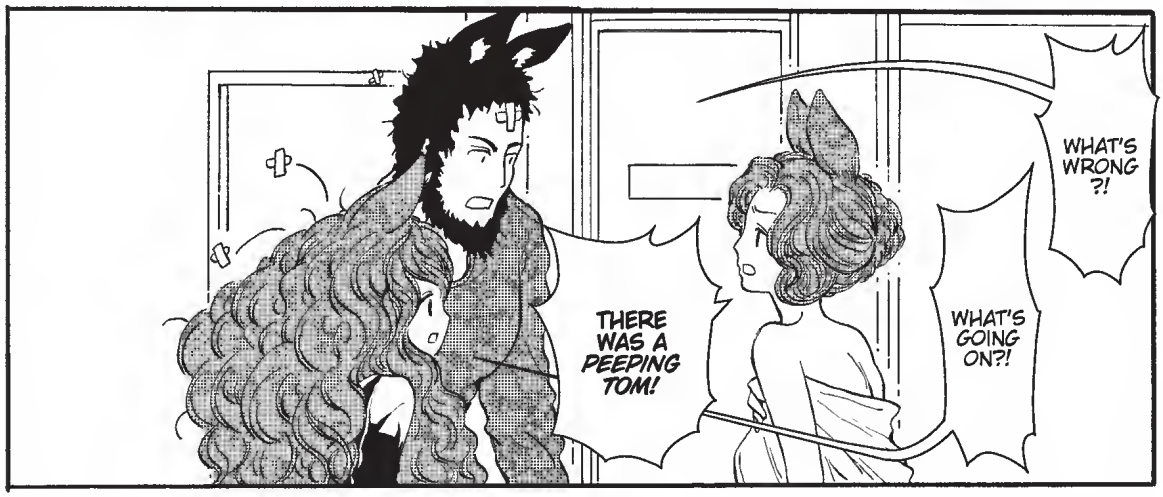
A CentaUr's Life
story & art
KEI MURAYAMA
6

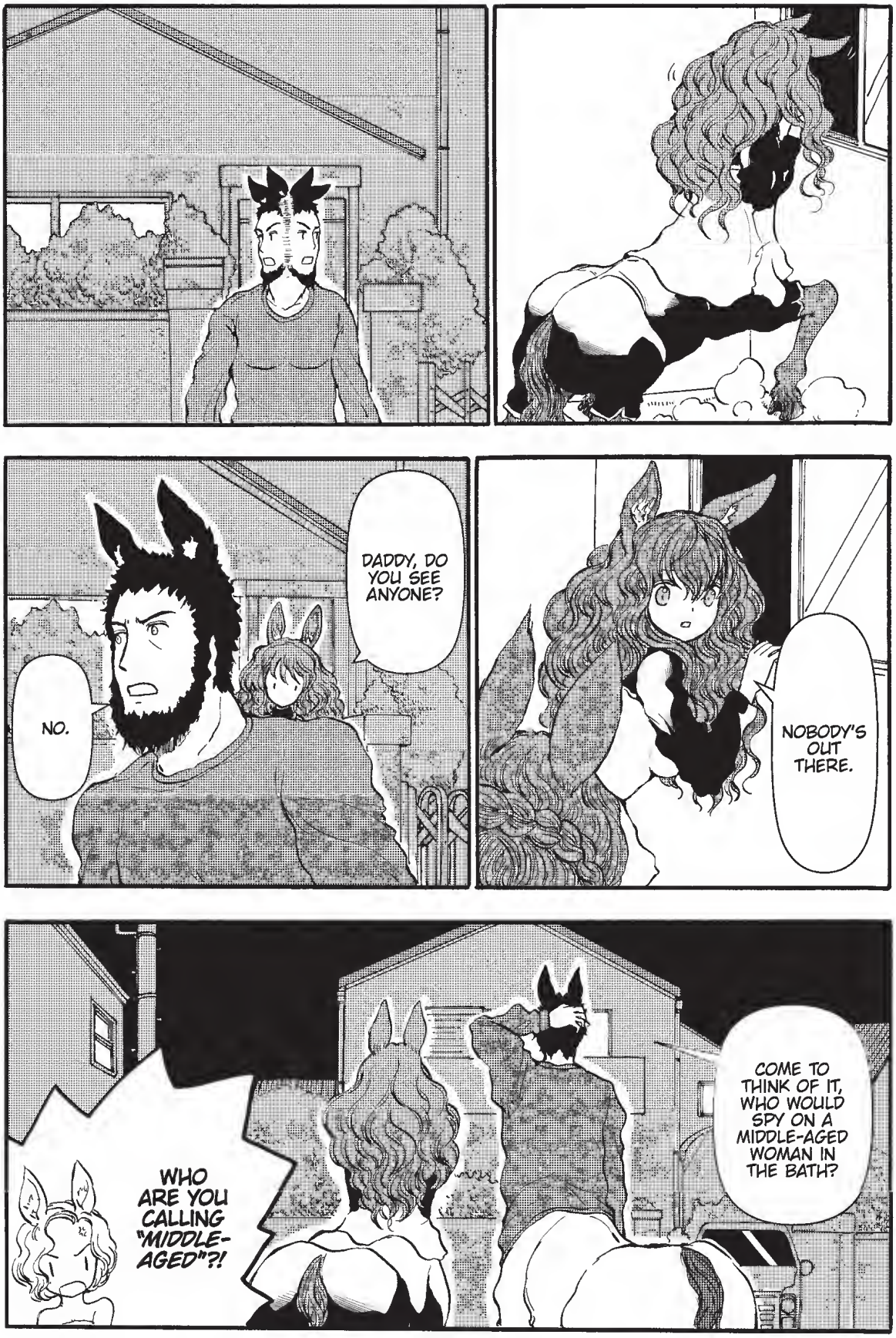
...as the Syrian military continues to strengthen its offensive...
SPLASH

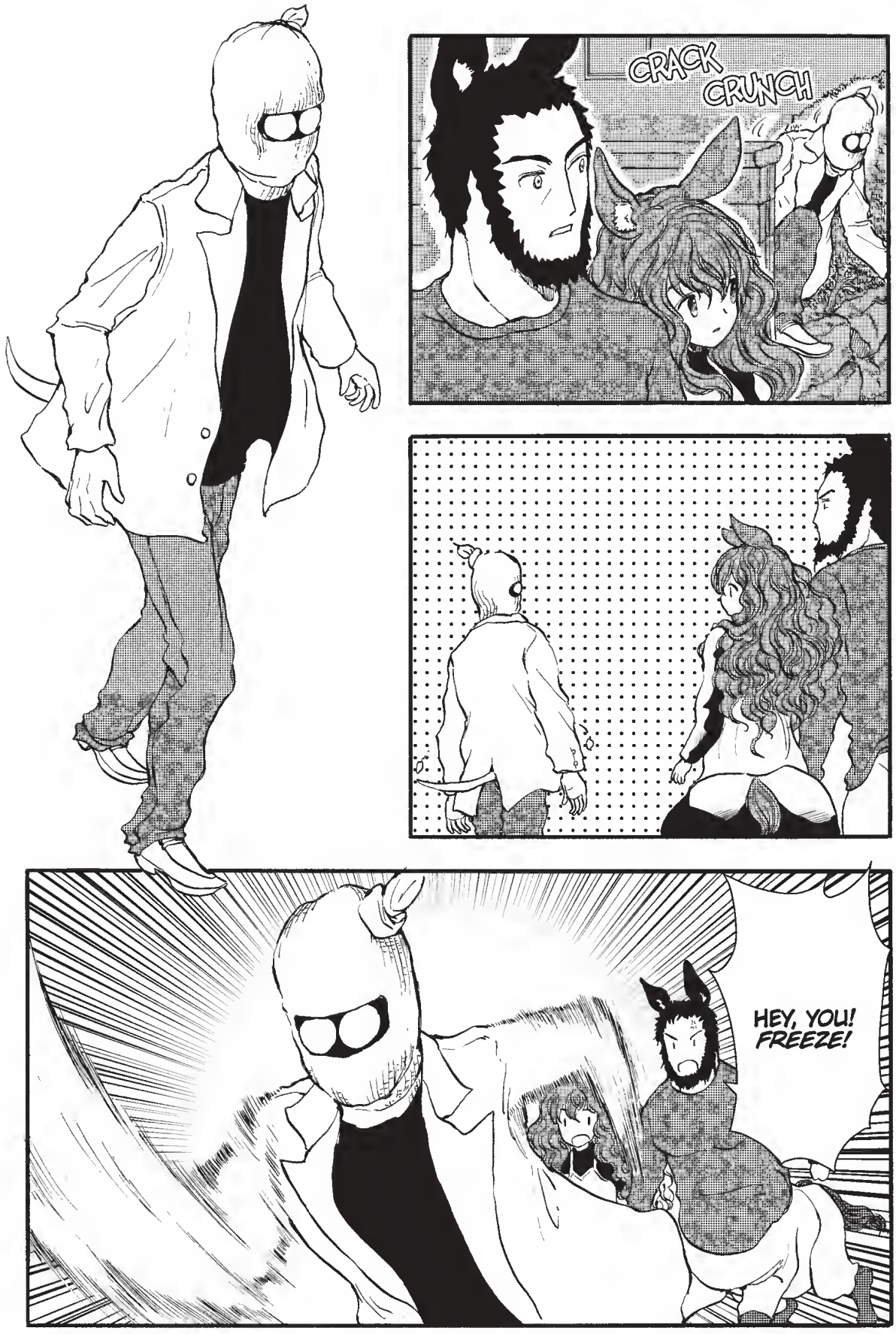
CHAPTER 30

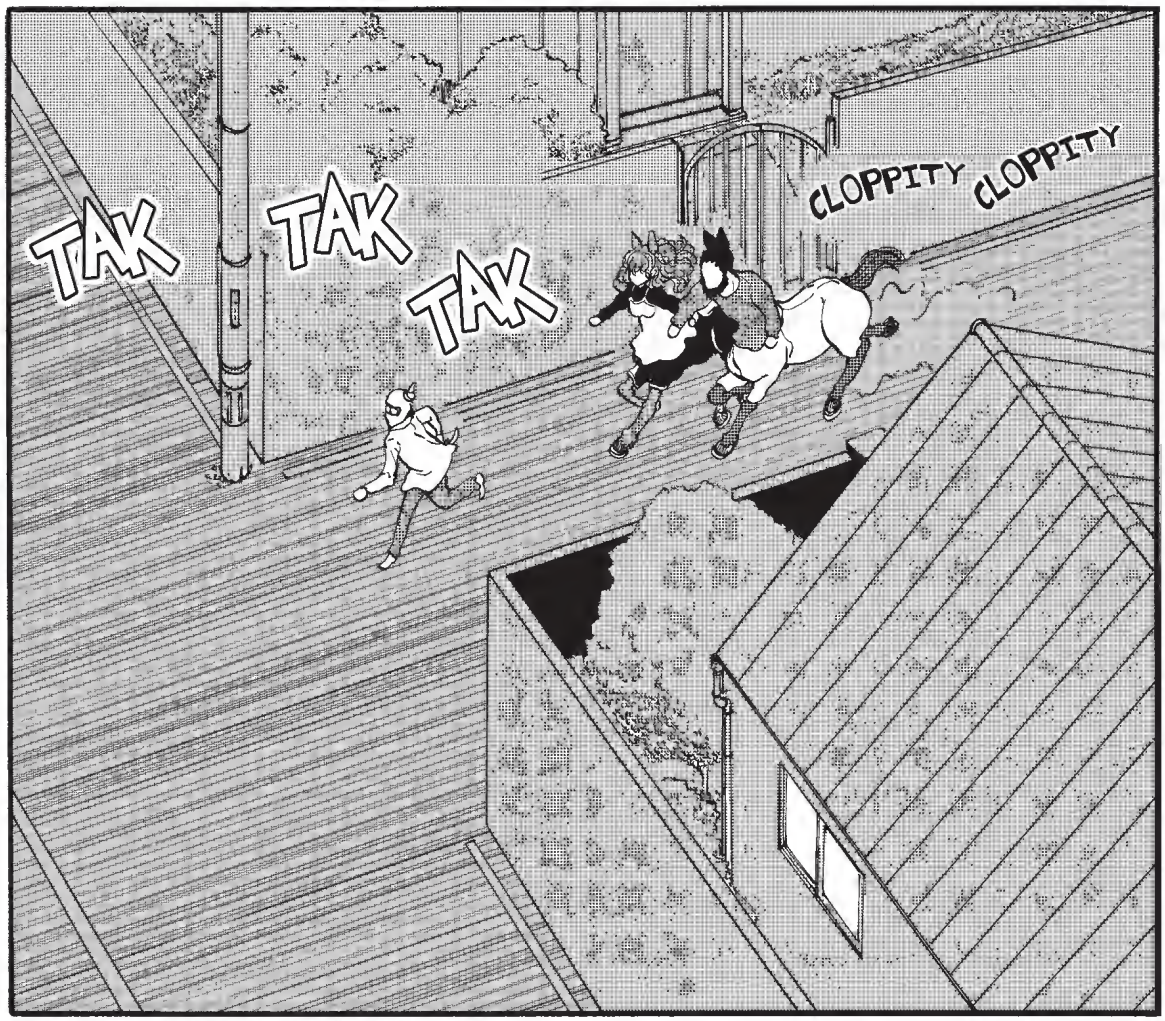
EEEK!

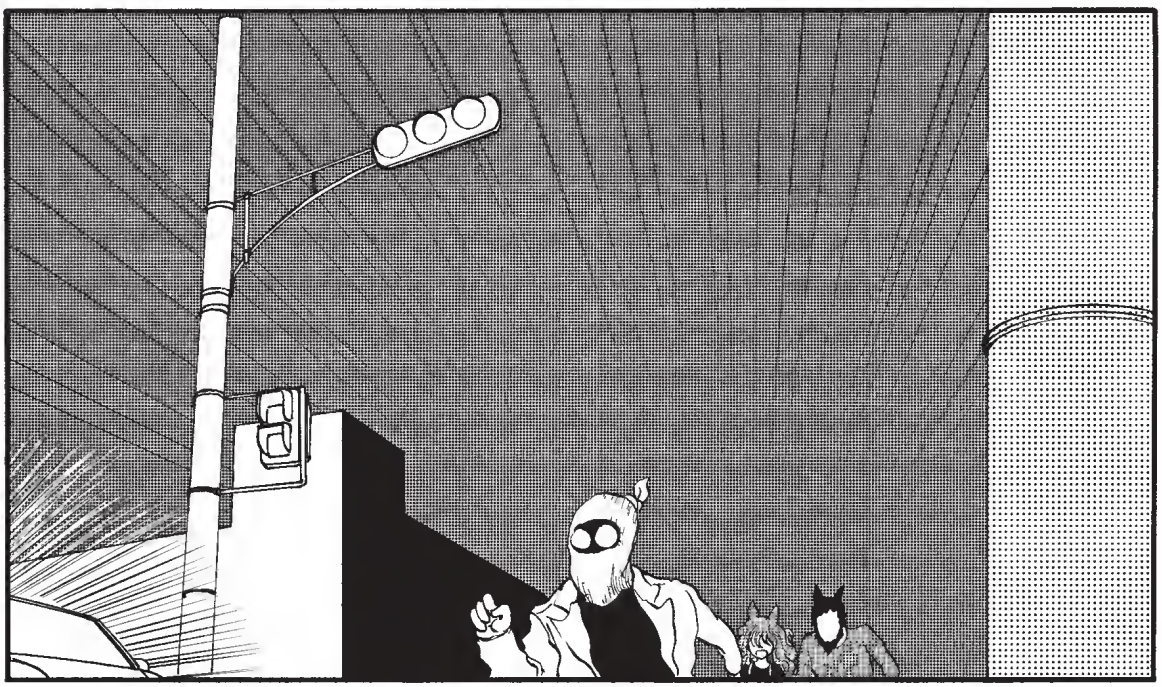

CRACK
WHAM
What happened?!
Oof!
HUH

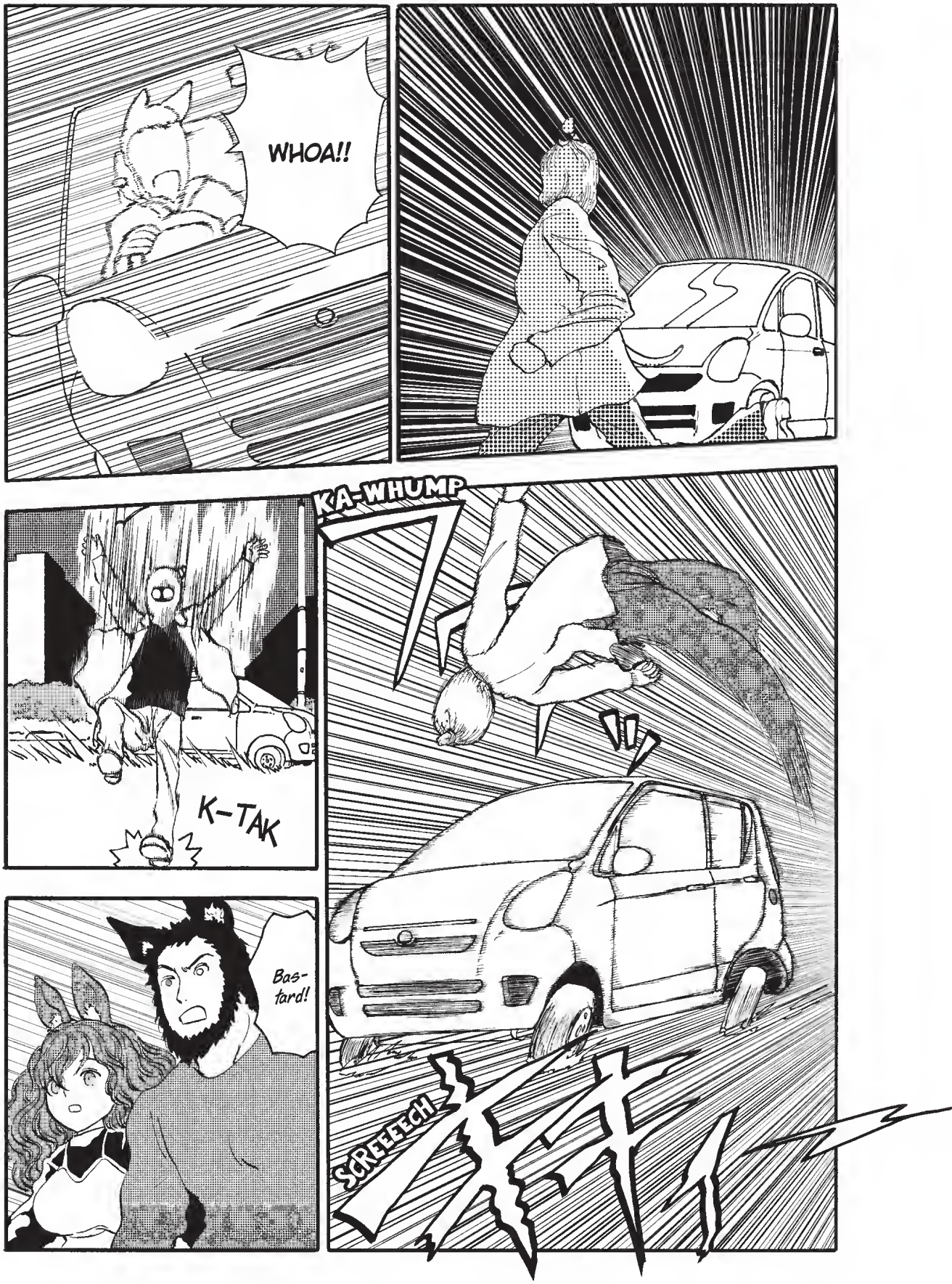

THERE WAS A PEEPING TOM!
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
WHAT'S WRONG?!

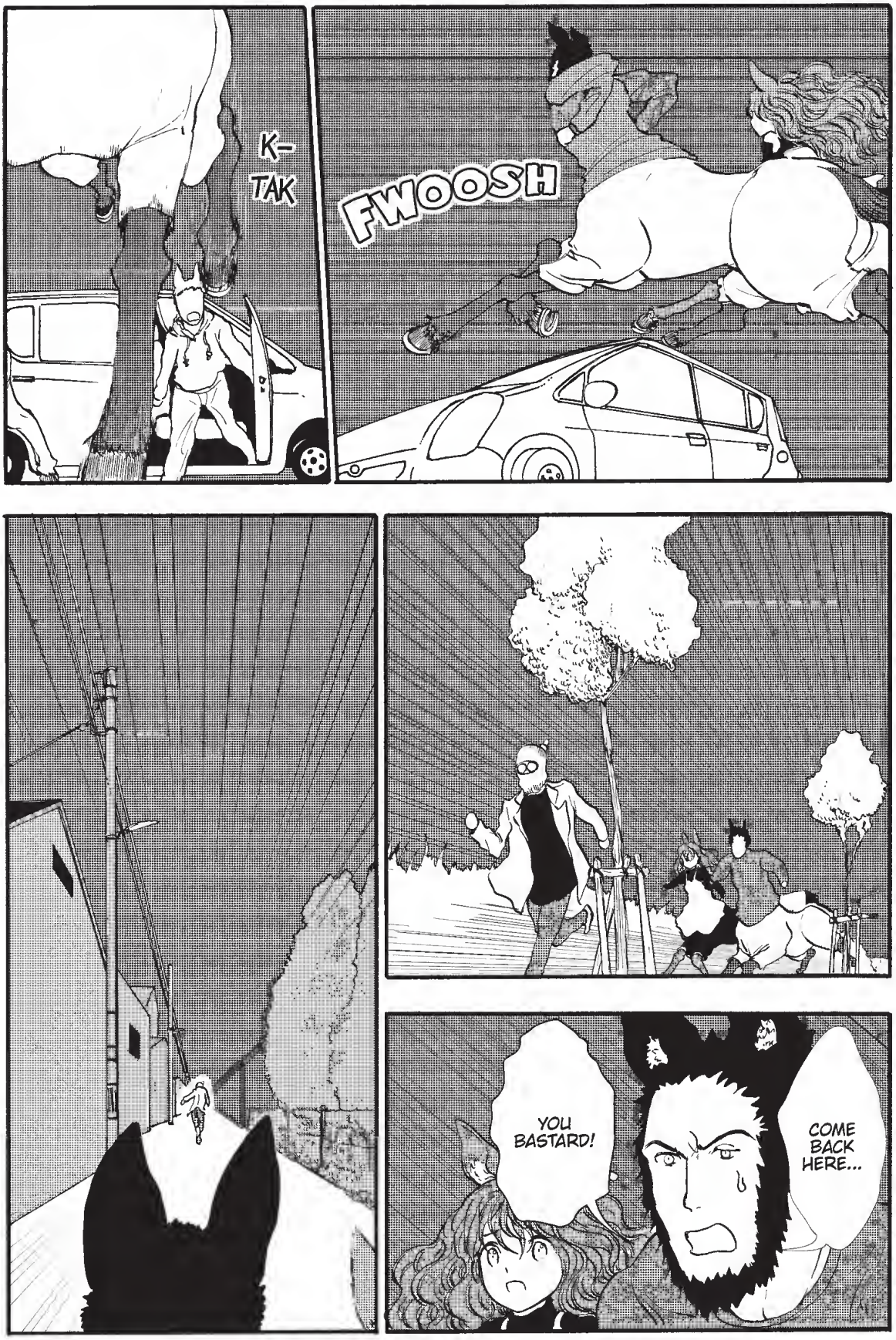

DADDY, DO YOU SEE ANYONE?
NO.
NOBODY'S OUT THERE.
COME TO THINK OF IT, WHO WOULD SPY ON A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN IN THE BATH?
WHO ARE YOU CALLING "MIDDLE-AGED"?!

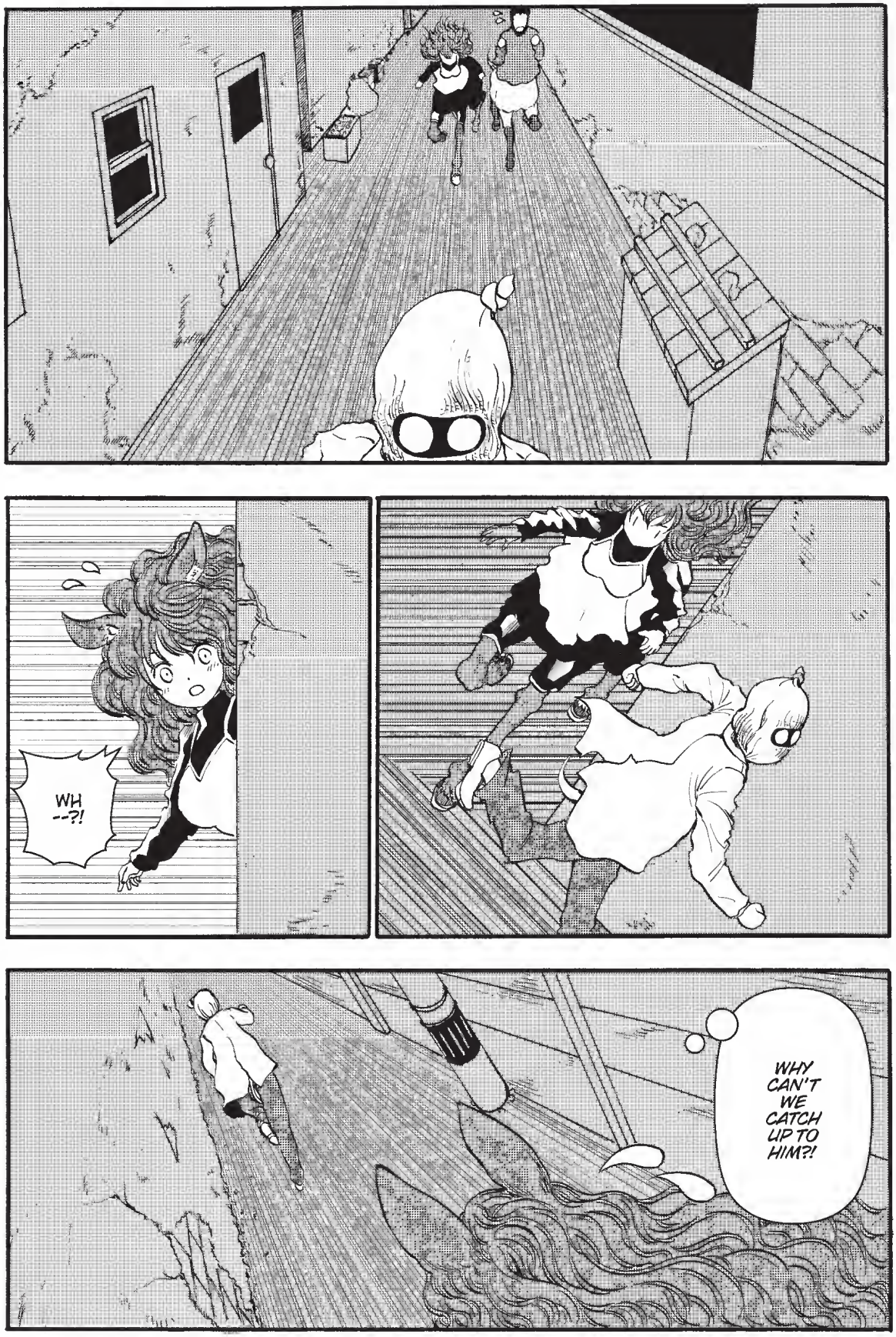

CRACK
CRUNCH
HEY, YOU!
FREEZE!


TAK
TAK
TAK
CLOPPITY
CLOPPITY




WHOA!!
KA-WHUMP
K-TAK
Bas-
tard!
SCREEECH

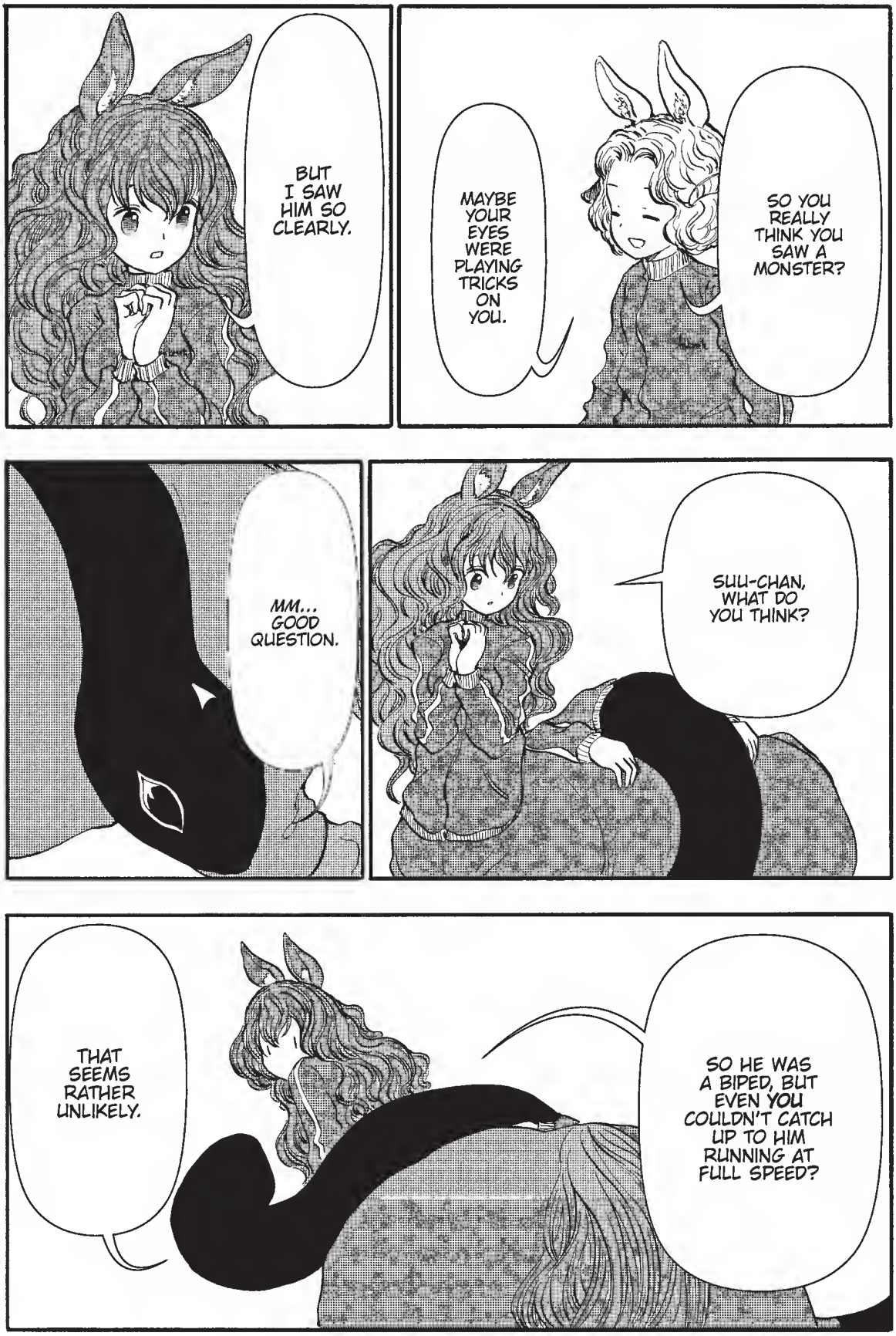

K-
TAK
FWOOSH
YOU BASTARD!
COME BACK HERE...

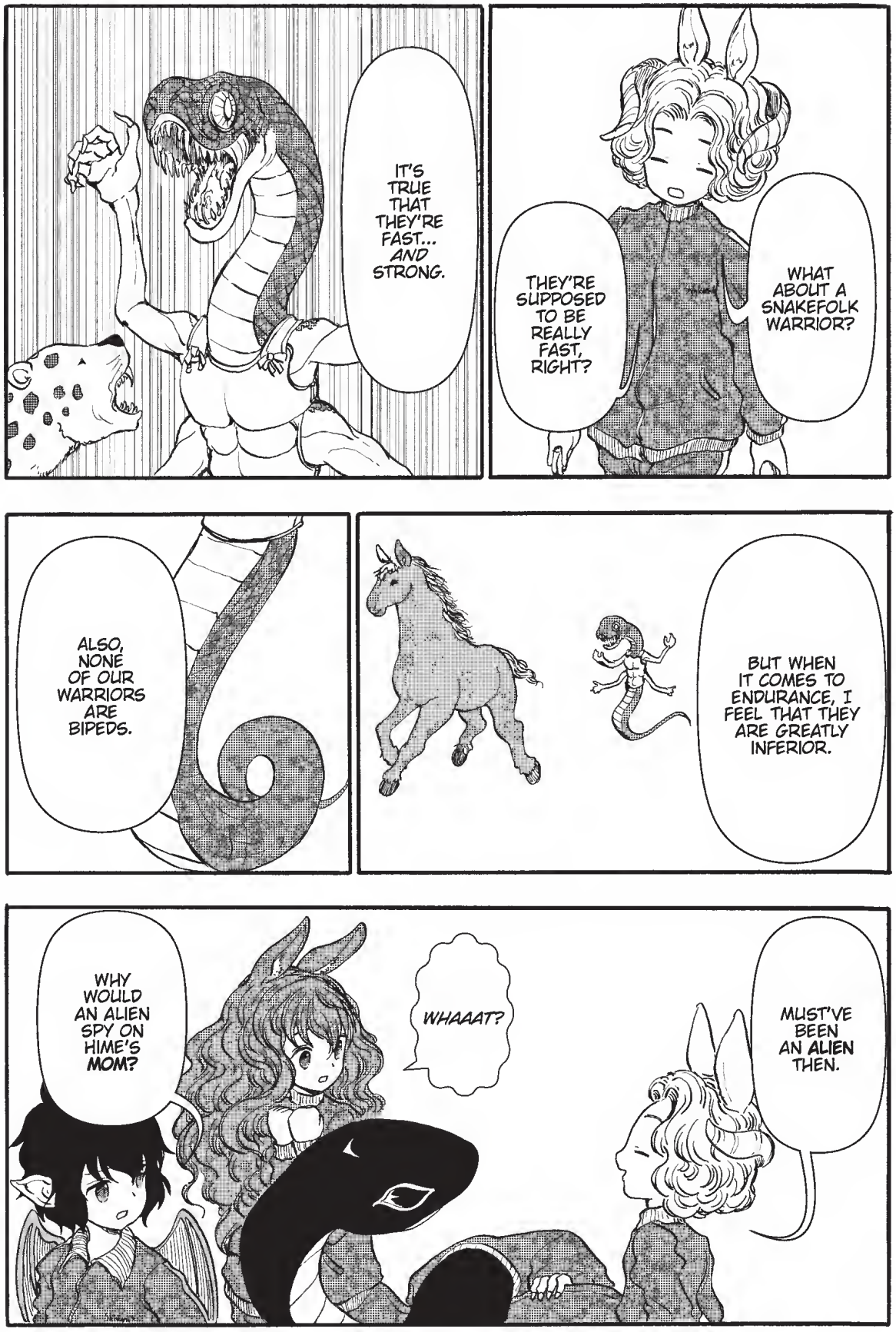

WH
--?!
WHY CAN'T WE CATCH UP TO HIM?!

Huf
Huf
DAD, I--
GRIP
OH NO...!
out of shape
Wheeze
Wheeze

?!
FLASH
What the...?

...AND THAT'S HOW IT HAPPENED.
Looks that way.
So she's even more out of shape than me? That's no good.
Wheeze
TAP
TAP


BUT I SAW HIM SO CLEARLY.
MAYBE YOUR EYES WERE PLAYING TRICKS ON YOU.
SO YOU REALLY THINK YOU SAW A MONSTER?
MM... GOOD QUESTION.
SUU-CHAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
THAT SEEMS RATHER UNLIKELY.
SO HE WAS A BIPED, BUT EVEN YOU COULDN'T CATCH UP TO HIM RUNNING AT FULL SPEED?

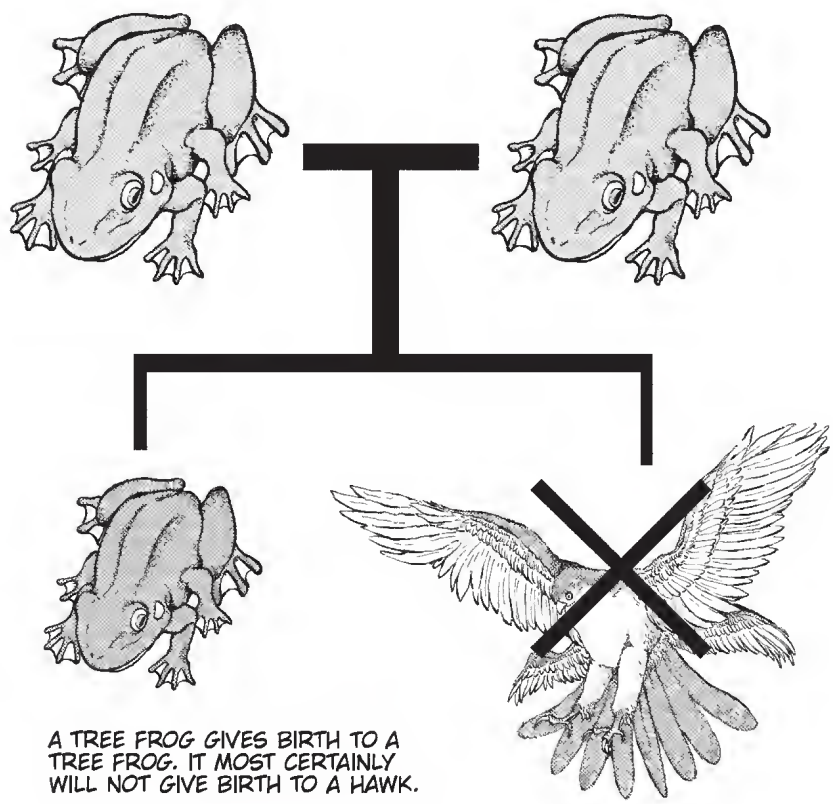

IT'S TRUE THAT THEY'RE FAST... AND STRONG.
THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE REALLY FAST, RIGHT?
WHAT ABOUT A SNAKEFOLK WARRIOR?
ALSO, NONE OF OUR WARRIORS ARE BIPEDS.
BUT WHEN IT COMES TO ENDURANCE, I FEEL THAT THEY ARE GREATLY INFERIOR.
WHY WOULD AN ALIEN SPY ON HIME'S MOM?
WHAAAT?
MUST'VE BEEN AN ALIEN THEN.

MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF MYTHICAL BEAST?
PICKING POCKETS, WRITING LETTERS, STEALING CHICKENS...
Oh!
THEN AGAIN, ALIENS ARE PRETTY MUCH ALWAYS UP TO THAT KIND OF STUPID STUFF.
WHAT EXACTLY DID IT LOOK LIKE?
WELL, ER...
Oh no, that's spooky!
SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT. IF YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN IT WITH LOGIC, IT MUST BE A MYTH.
SO IT MUSTA BEEN A PRANK THEN.
This looks so fake.
I DUNNO...
Science Tales
1937
2
IT'S THE COVER FROM AN OLD SCI-FI MAGAZINE.
AH! THIS IS IT! WHERE'D YOU FIND THIS?

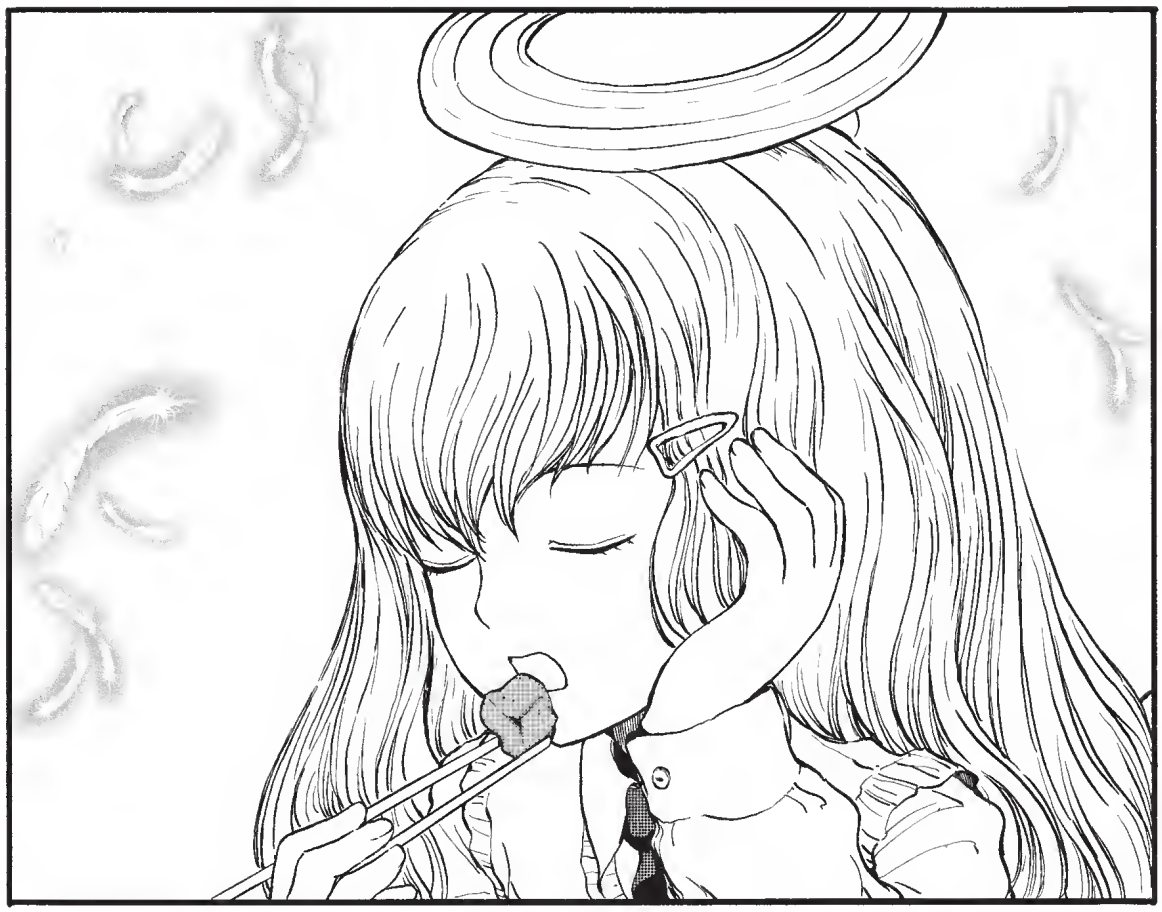
A CentaUr's Life

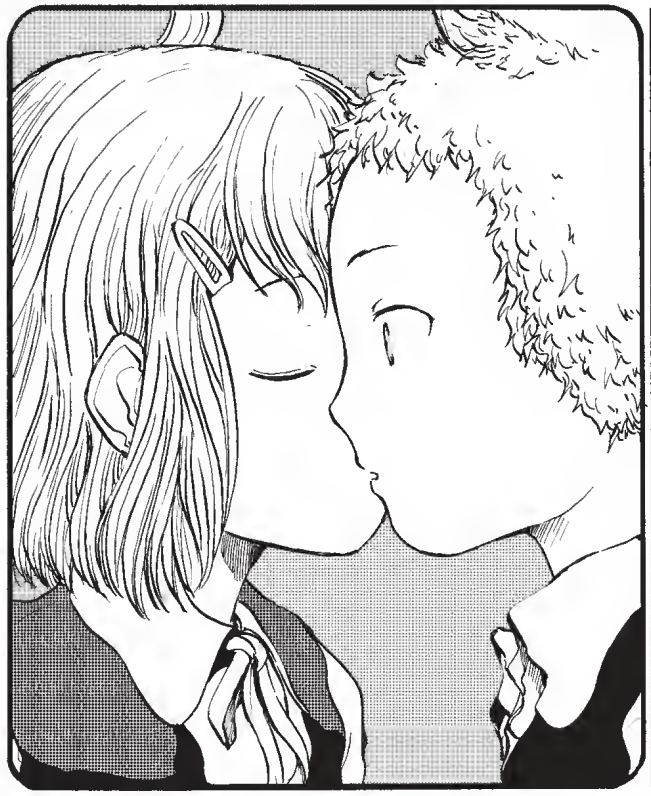
GENETICS MADE EASY: LESSON 1
WHAT IS HEREDITY?

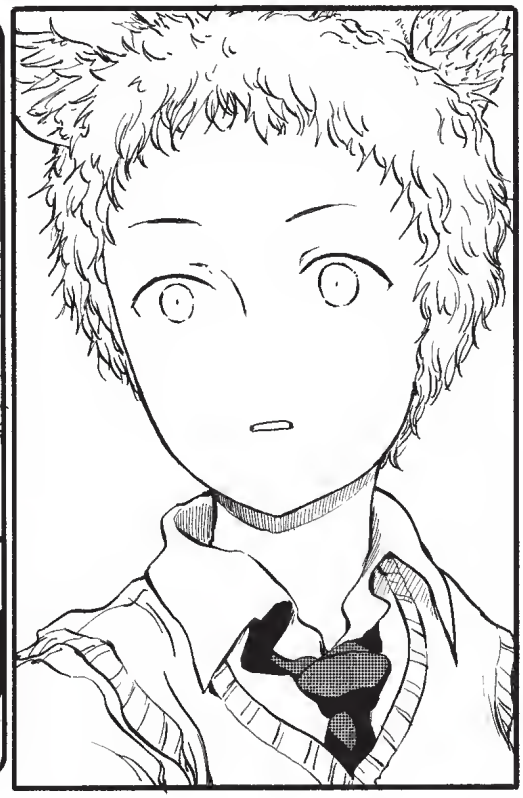
HEREDITY IS THE PHENOMENON BY WHICH THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENTS ARE PASSED ON TO OFFSPRING. THE CHILD OF A FROG IS OF COURSE A FROG. LIKEWISE, THAT OF A TREE FROG IS A TREE FROG; THAT OF A SPOTTED FROG IS A SPOTTED FROG. AS A PERHAPS MORE RELATABLE EXAMPLE, CONSIDER HOW KIDS' FACES TEND TO RESEMBLE THOSE OF THEIR PARENTS OR BROTHERS AND SISTERS. IN MOST CASES, THEY ALSO TEND TO SHARE THE SAME BODY TYPE AS ONE OF THEIR PARENTS. HOW THESE CHARACTERISTICS ARE PASSED DOWN IS FAMOUSLY EXPLAINED BY MENDEL'S LAWS. WE WON'T WRITE THEM ALL HERE, BUT SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT HEREDITY IS GOVERNED BY RULES. GENES ACT AS THE INTERMEDIARY WHICH MAKES HEREDITY POSSIBLE.



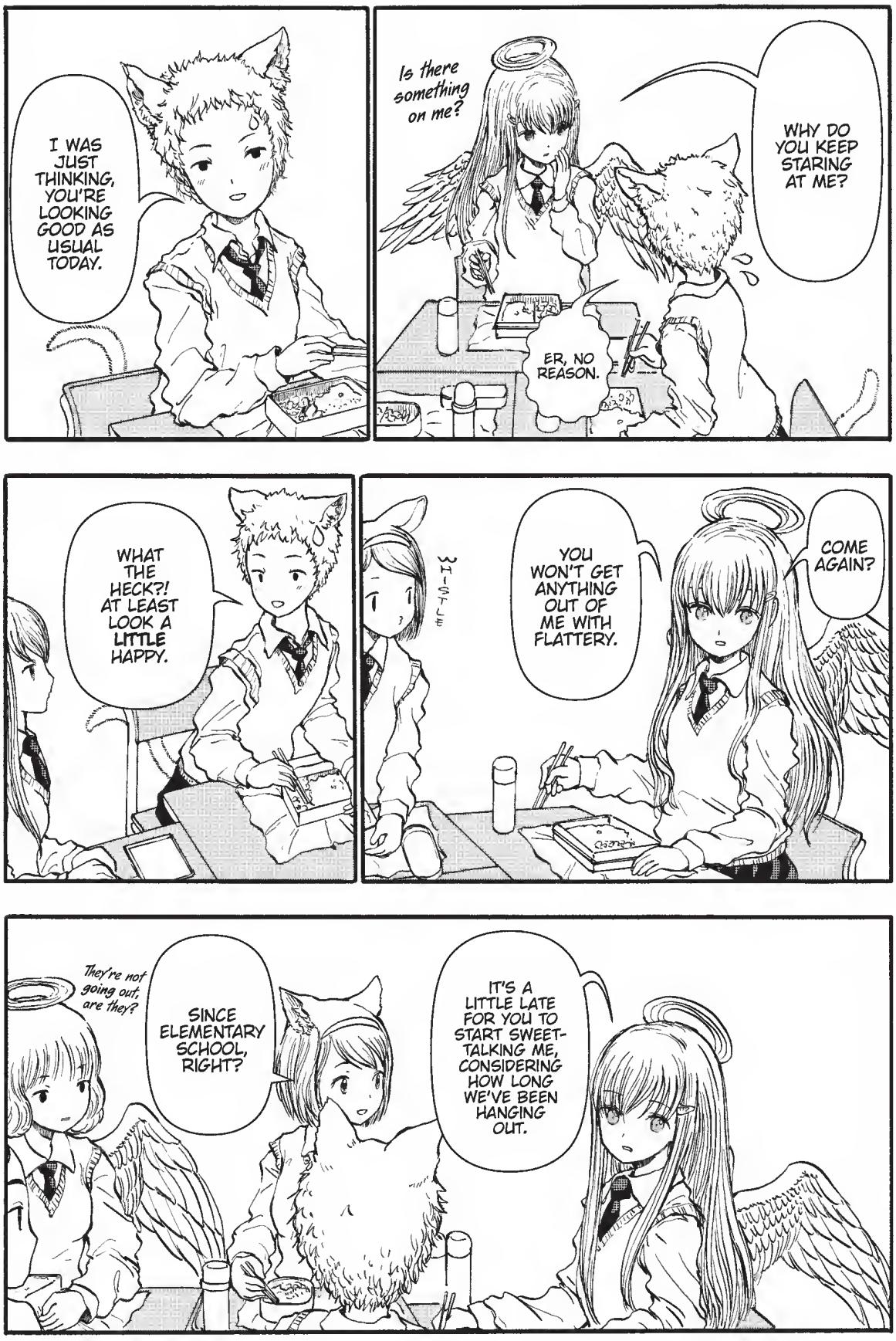
A TREE FROG GIVES BIRTH TO A TREE FROG. IT MOST CERTAINLY WILL NOT GIVE BIRTH TO A HAWK.

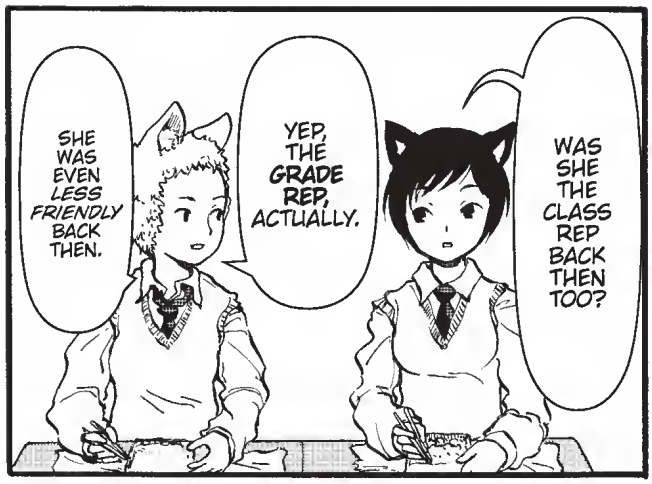


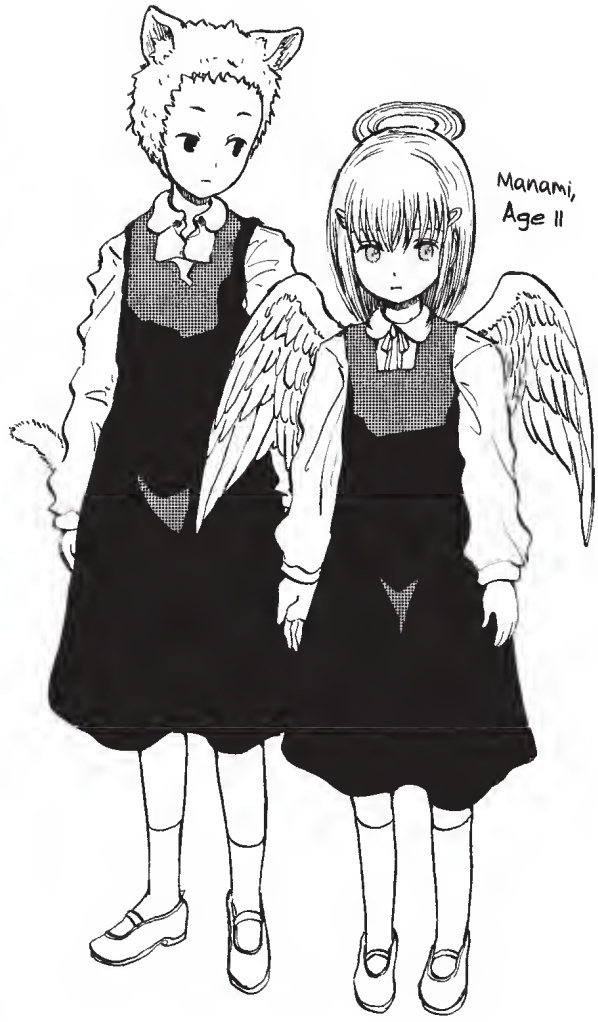


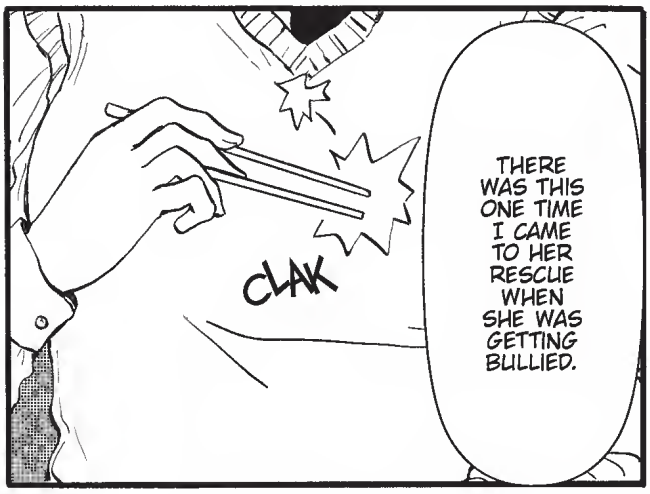


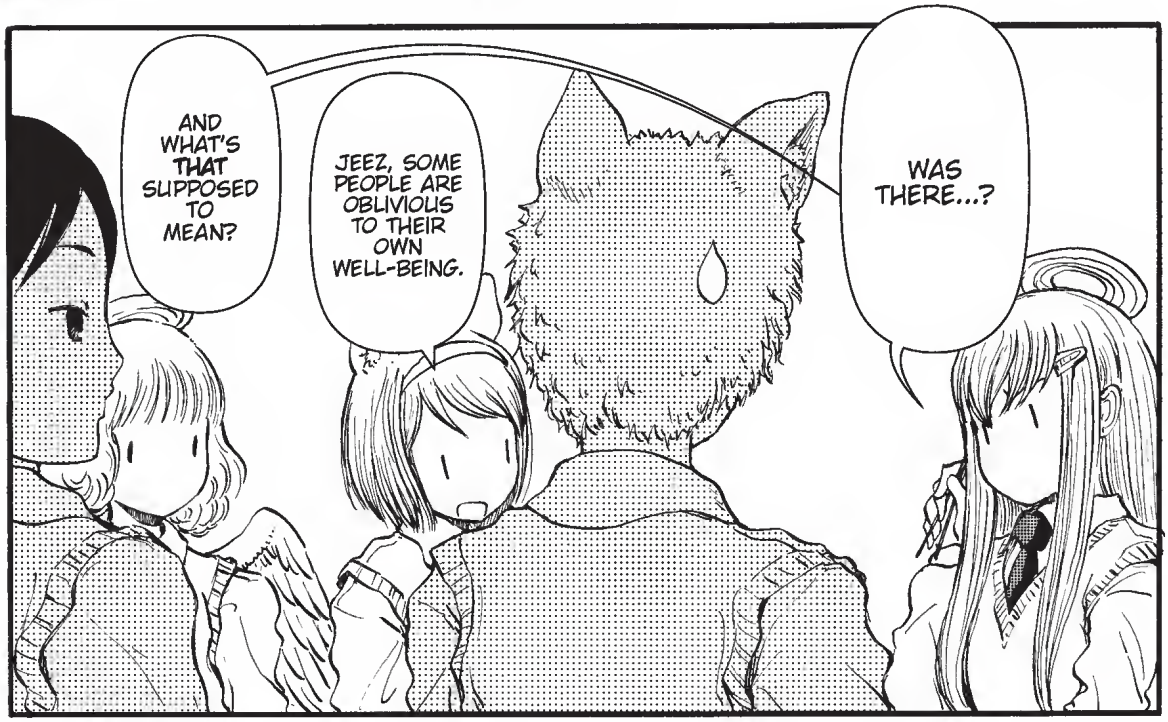
CHAPTER 31

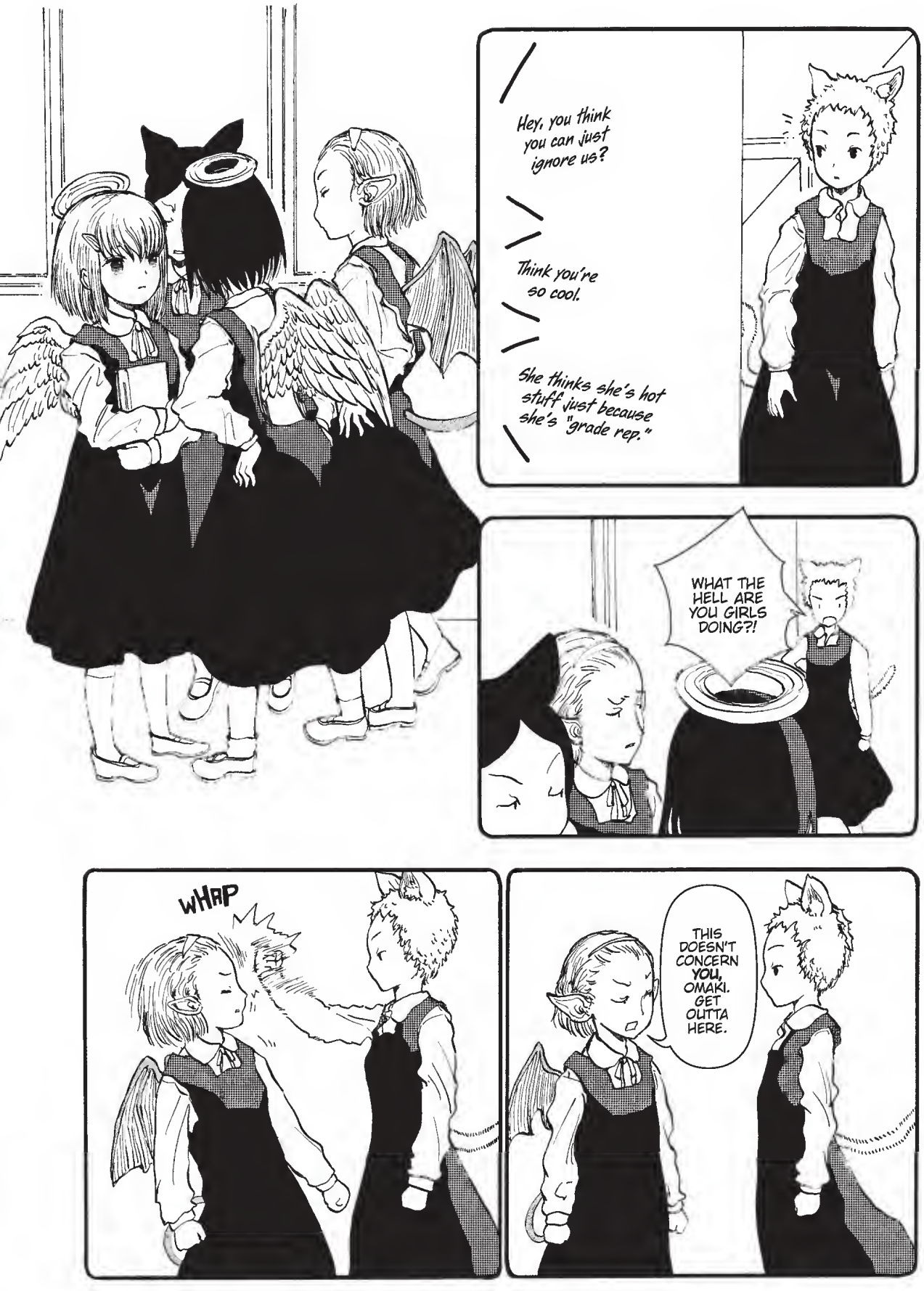

I WAS JUST THINKING, YOU'RE LOOKING GOOD AS USUAL TODAY.
Is there something on me?
WHY DO YOU KEEP STARING AT ME?
ER, NO REASON.
WHAT THE HECK?! AT LEAST LOOK A LITTLE HAPPY.
YOU WON'T GET ANYTHING OUT OF ME WITH FLATTERY.
COME AGAIN?
They're not going out, are they?
SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, RIGHT?
IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR YOU TO START SWEET-TALKING ME, CONSIDERING HOW LONG WE'VE BEEN HANGING OUT.


WAS SHE THE CLASS REP BACK THEN TOO?
YEP, THE GRADE REP, ACTUALLY.
SHE WAS EVEN LESS FRIENDLY BACK THEN.


Manami, Age 11

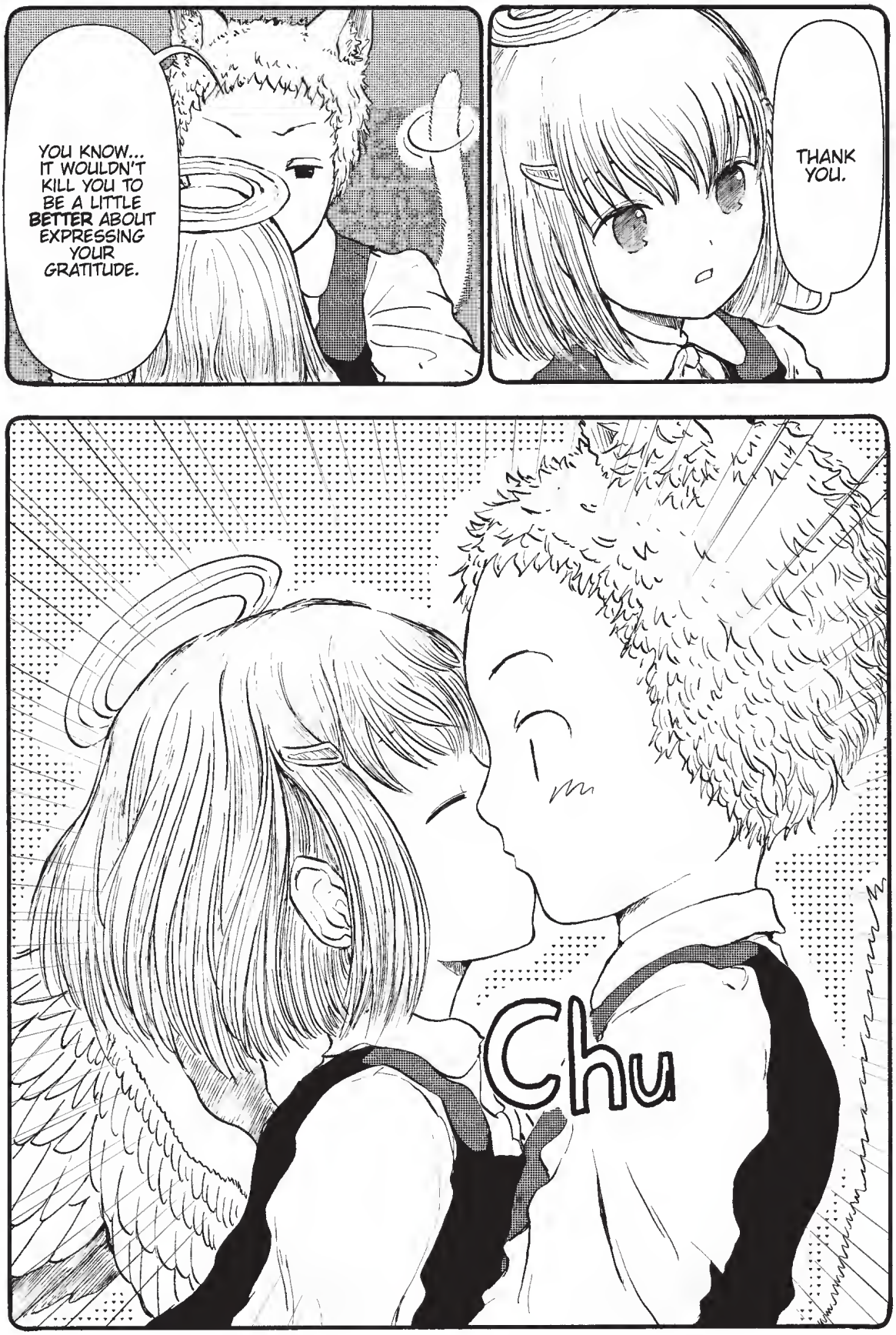

THERE WAS THIS ONE TIME I CAME TO HER RESCUE WHEN SHE WAS GETTING BULLIED.
CLAK

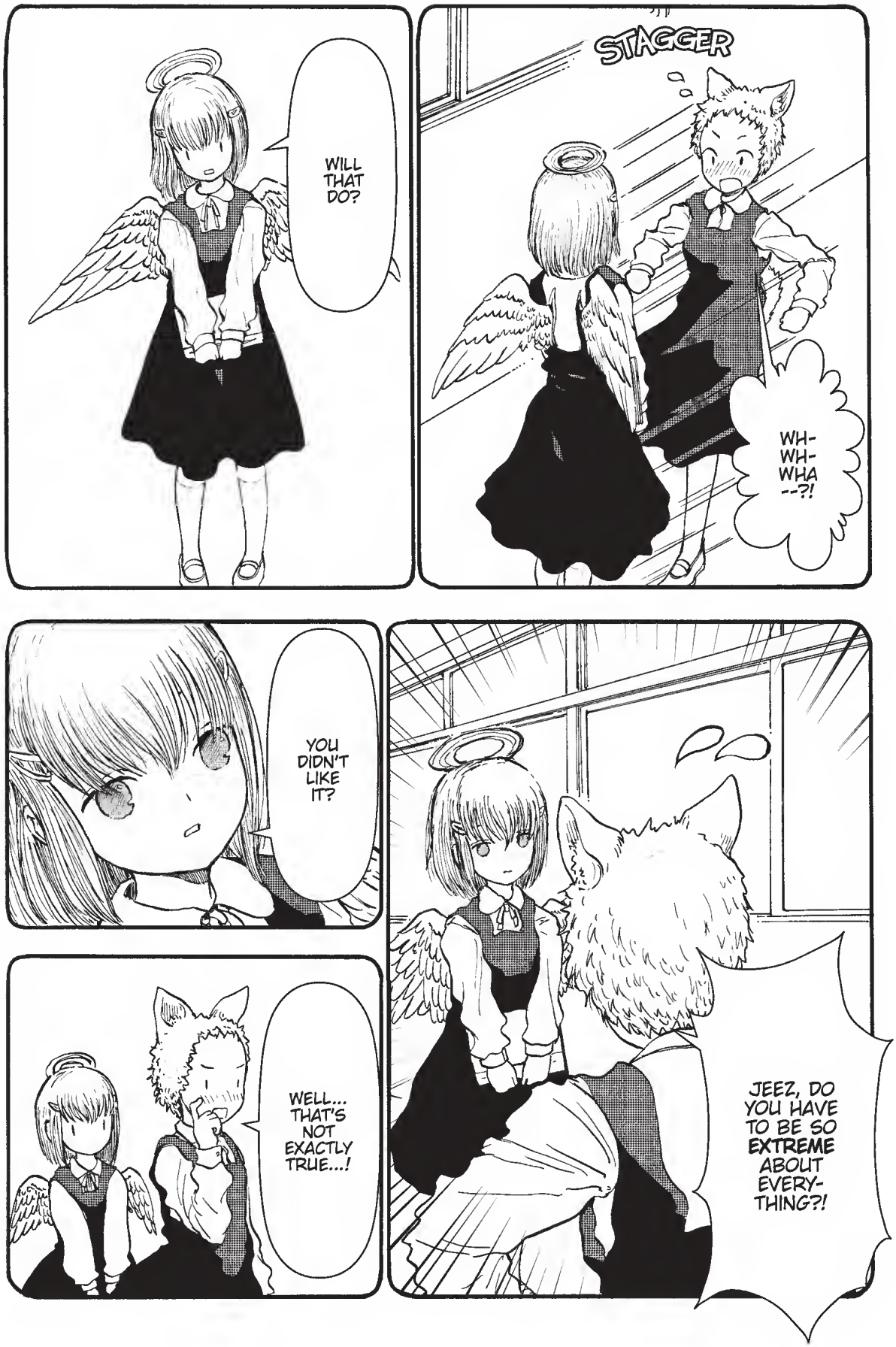

AND WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
JEEZ, SOME PEOPLE ARE OBLIVIOUS TO THEIR OWN WELL-BEING.
WAS THERE...?

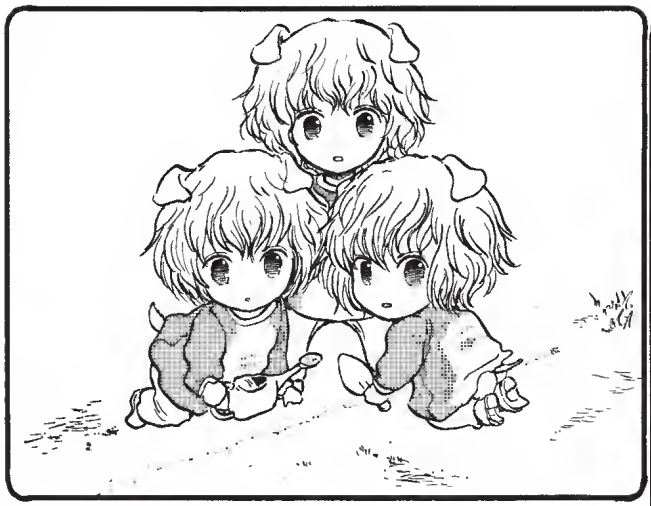

Hey, you think you can just ignore us?
Think you're so cool.
She thinks she's hot stuff just because she's "grade rep."
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU GIRLS DOING?!
WHAP
THIS DOESN'T CONCERN YOU, OMAKI. GET OUTTA HERE.

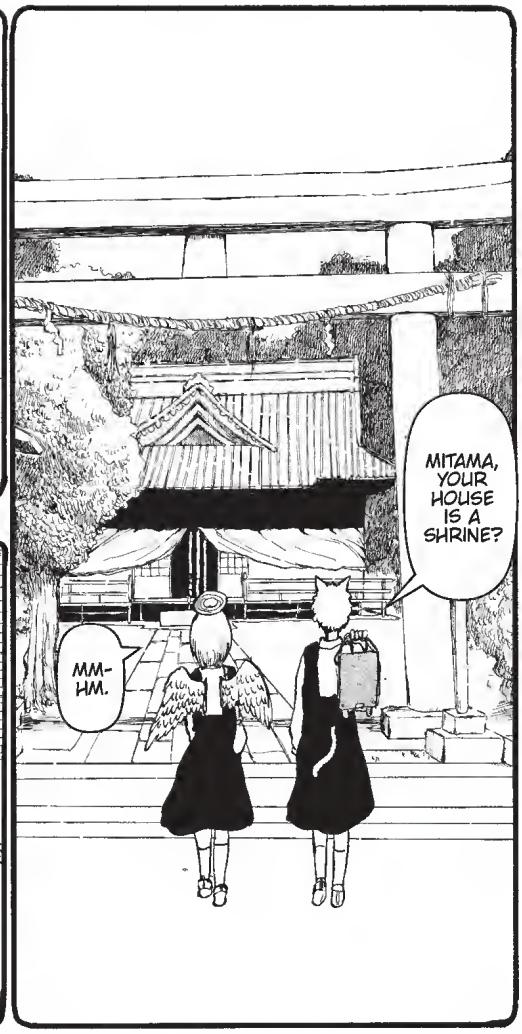
YOU BETTER BACK OFF, OR YOU'RE NEXT.
GRIND GRIND
LOOK AT MISS BADASS HERE. YOU'RE CALLING ALL THE SHOTS AROUND SCHOOL, IS THAT IT?
TUG TUG
AND HOW DO A BUNCH OF DUMB, UGLY GIRLS WHO AREN'T EVEN ANY GOOD AT SPORTS PLAN TO PICK ON ME?
OH?
GRAB

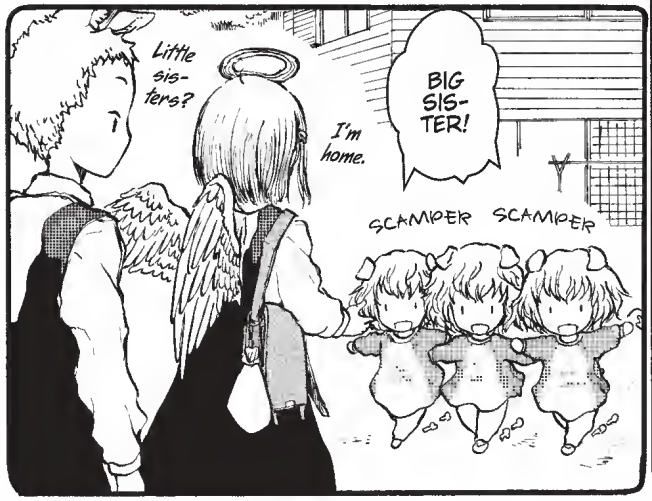
NOW THEN.
WE'RE TELLING THE TEACHER AND OUR MOMS ON YOU!
I SUGGEST YOU DON'T.
BIFF
BOP
SHOULDN'T YOU BE, Y'KNOW, A LITTLE MORE THANKFUL?
HEY, WHAT'S YOUR DEAL?
DON'T YOU THINK YOU WENT TOO FAR?
IS THAT IT? HOW 'BOUT A "THANK YOU"?
LOOKS LIKE I'LL STILL MAKE IT TO THE STORE IN TIME FOR THEIR DISCOUNT.
LUCKY ME...

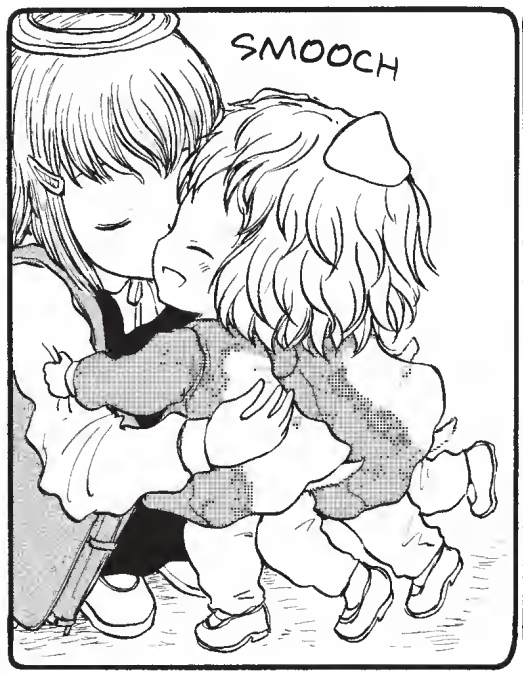

YOU KNOW... IT WOULDN'T KILL YOU TO BE A LITTLE BETTER ABOUT EXPRESSING YOUR GRATITUDE.
THANK YOU.
Chu

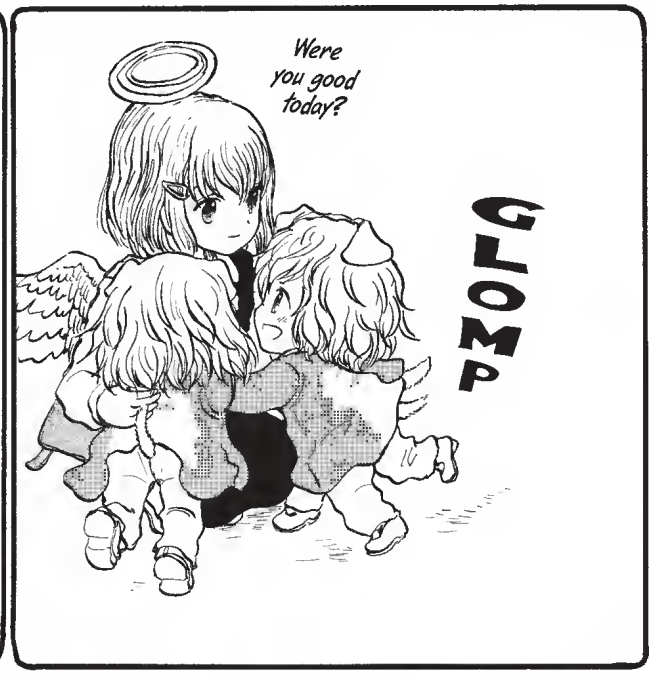

WILL THAT DO?
STAGGER
WH-WH-WHA--?!
YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT?
WELL... THAT'S NOT EXACTLY TRUE...!
JEEZ, DO YOU HAVE TO BE SO EXTREME ABOUT EVERY-THING?!




MITAMA, YOUR HOUSE IS A SHRINE?
MM-HM.


Little sis-ters?
I'm home.
BIG SIS-TER!
SCAMPER SCAMPER


SMOOCH

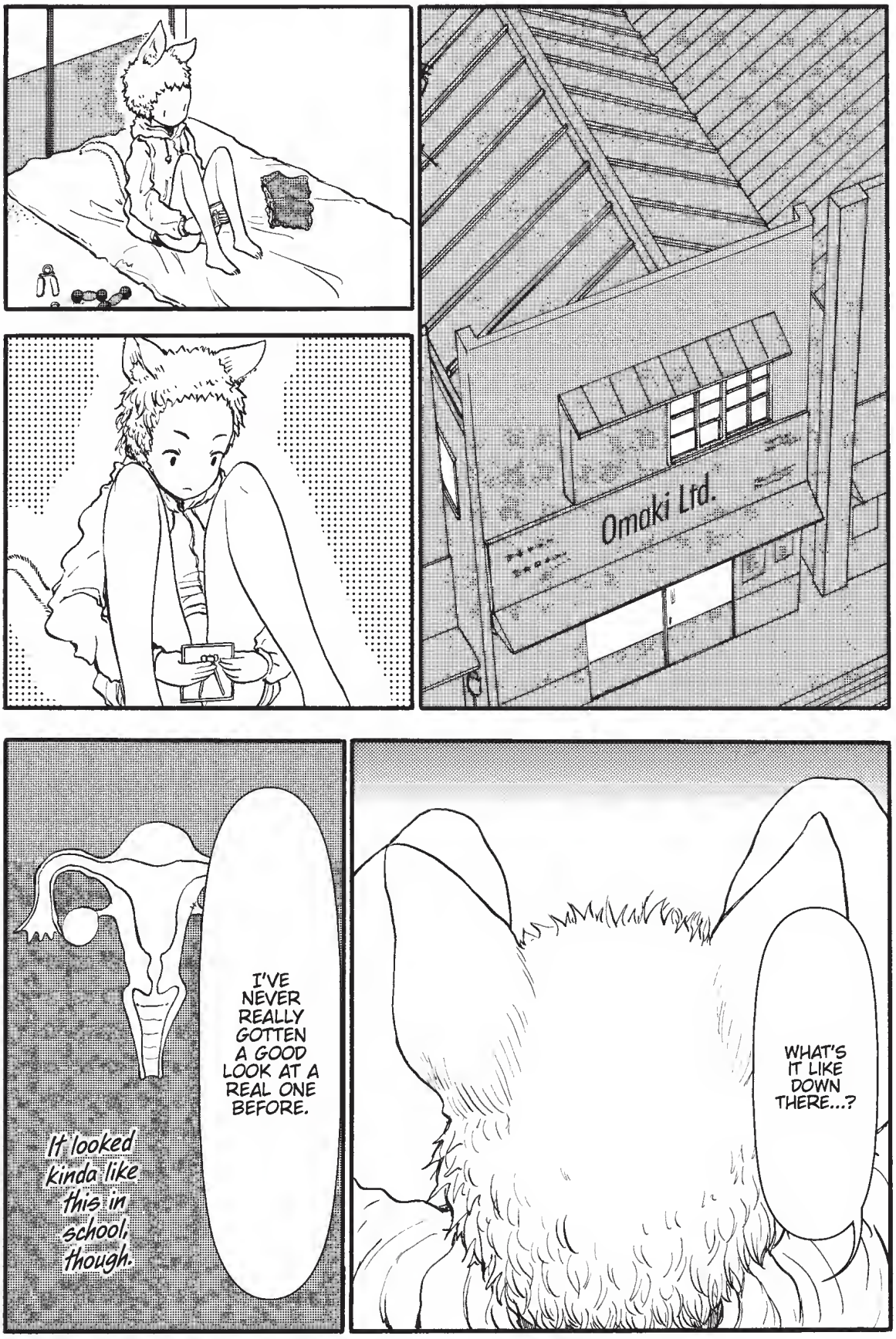

Were you good today?
GLOMP

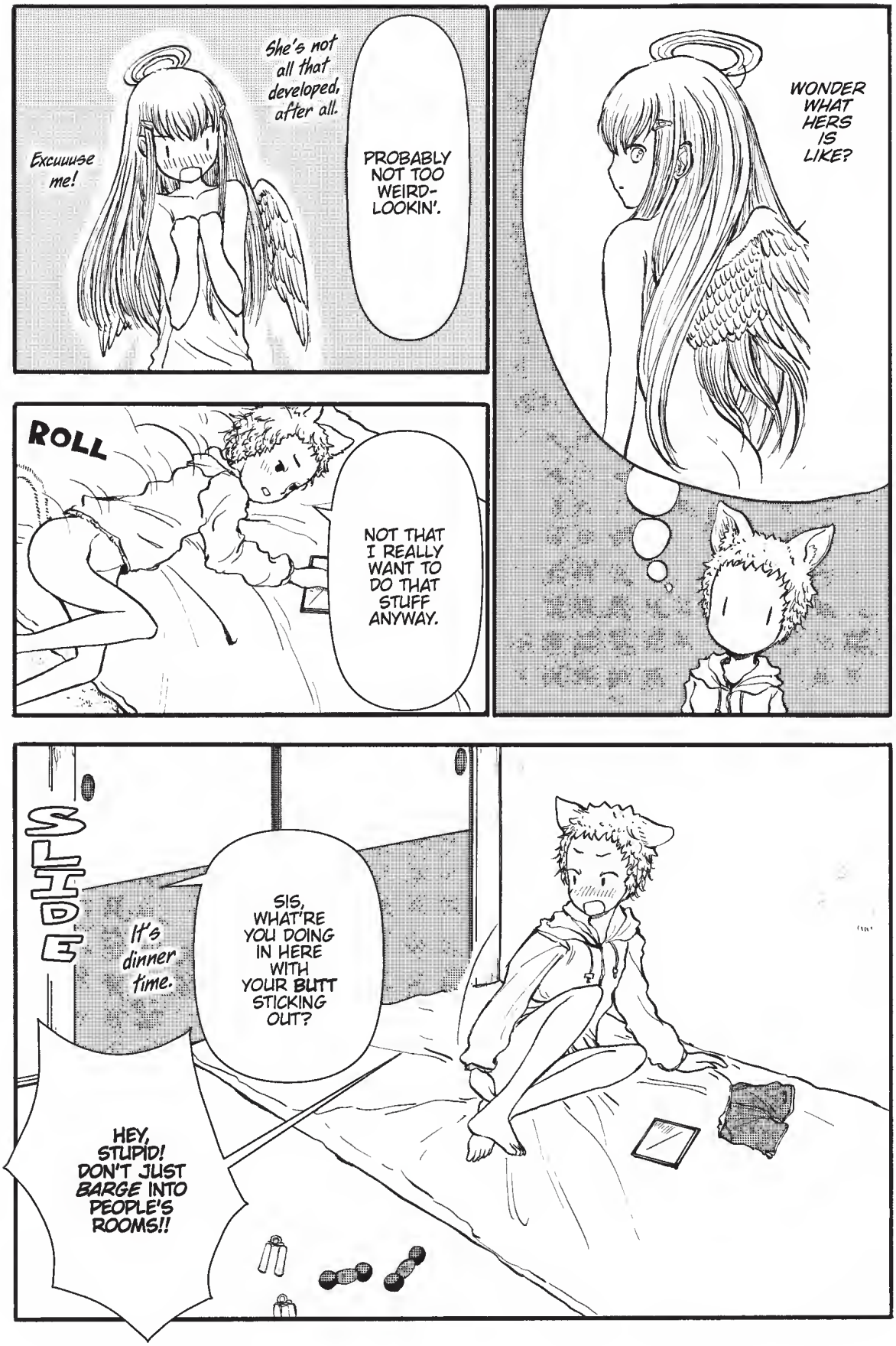
NUZZLE
YOU ALWAYS THIS SMOOCHY?
SMOOCH
SMOOCH
Interesting.
WELL, THEY CRY IF I DON'T DO IT.
FWEND?
THIS IS YOUR BIG SISTER'S FRIEND.
Nya~!
NYAA!
Whoa.
SCAMPER
SCAMPER

CHIGUSA SAYS SHE'LL LET YOU HOLD HER.
Nya!
Hmm...
IN HER MIND, SHE'S BEING GENEROUS.
OH, SHE'LL "LET" ME, WILL SHE?
AHH... MEMO-RIES.
NUZZLE NUZZLE
Hee-hee!

SO TAMA, YOU STILL SMOOCH YOUR LITTLE SISTERS LIKE THAT?
MM, ABOUT THAT...
LATELY, THE OLDER ONES DON'T LIKE IT.
NO!
CHI-CHAN'S A BIG GIRL NOW!
WE'RE BIG SISTERS NOW!
Shut up and lemme smooch you!
GUESS THEY'RE FINALLY GRADUATING FROM THEIR SISTER COMPLEX.
GUESS THAT MEANS THERE'LL BE NO MORE THANK YOU SMOOCHES, EITHER.
YOU TWO ARE LESBIANS, RIGHT?
HM?

AND IT'S NOT WEIRD?
NOT AT ALL.
DO YOU GO DOWN ON EACH OTHER AND STUFF?
SURE, SOMETIMES.
EEEK!
MICHI HAS THE *PRETTIEST* LITTLE PINK ONE YOU'VE EVER--
GOTCHA. SORRY TO INTERRUPT.
THESE TWO ARE TOO UNIQUE. I CAN'T USE THEM FOR REFERENCE.
COME TALK TO US ANYTIME!

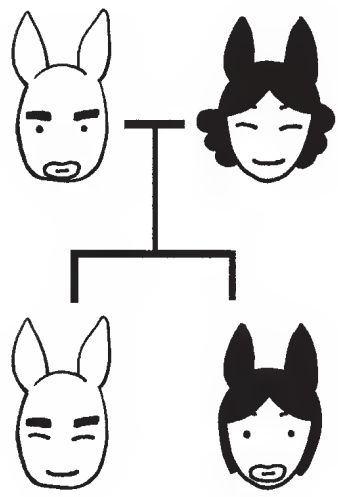

Omaki Ltd.
WHAT'S IT LIKE DOWN THERE...?
I'VE NEVER REALLY GOTTEN A GOOD LOOK AT A REAL ONE BEFORE.
It looked kinda like this in school, though.


WONDER WHAT HERS IS LIKE?
PROBABLY NOT TOO WEIRD-LOOKIN'.
She's not all that developed, after all.
Excuuuse me!
ROLL
NOT THAT I REALLY WANT TO DO THAT STUFF ANYWAY.
SLIDE
SIS, WHAT'RE YOU DOING IN HERE WITH YOUR BUTT STICKING OUT?
It's dinner time.
HEY, STUPID! DON'T JUST BARGE INTO PEOPLE'S ROOMS!!

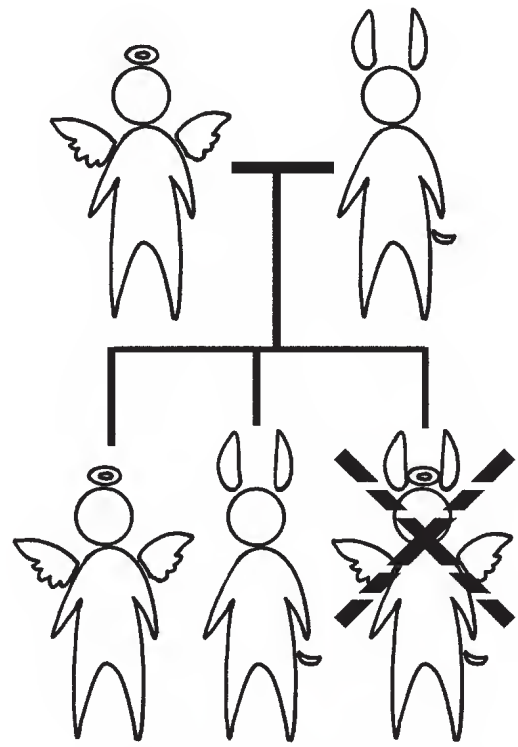
A CentaUr's Life

GENETICS MADE EASY: LESSON 2
HOW ARE HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS PASSED DOWN?

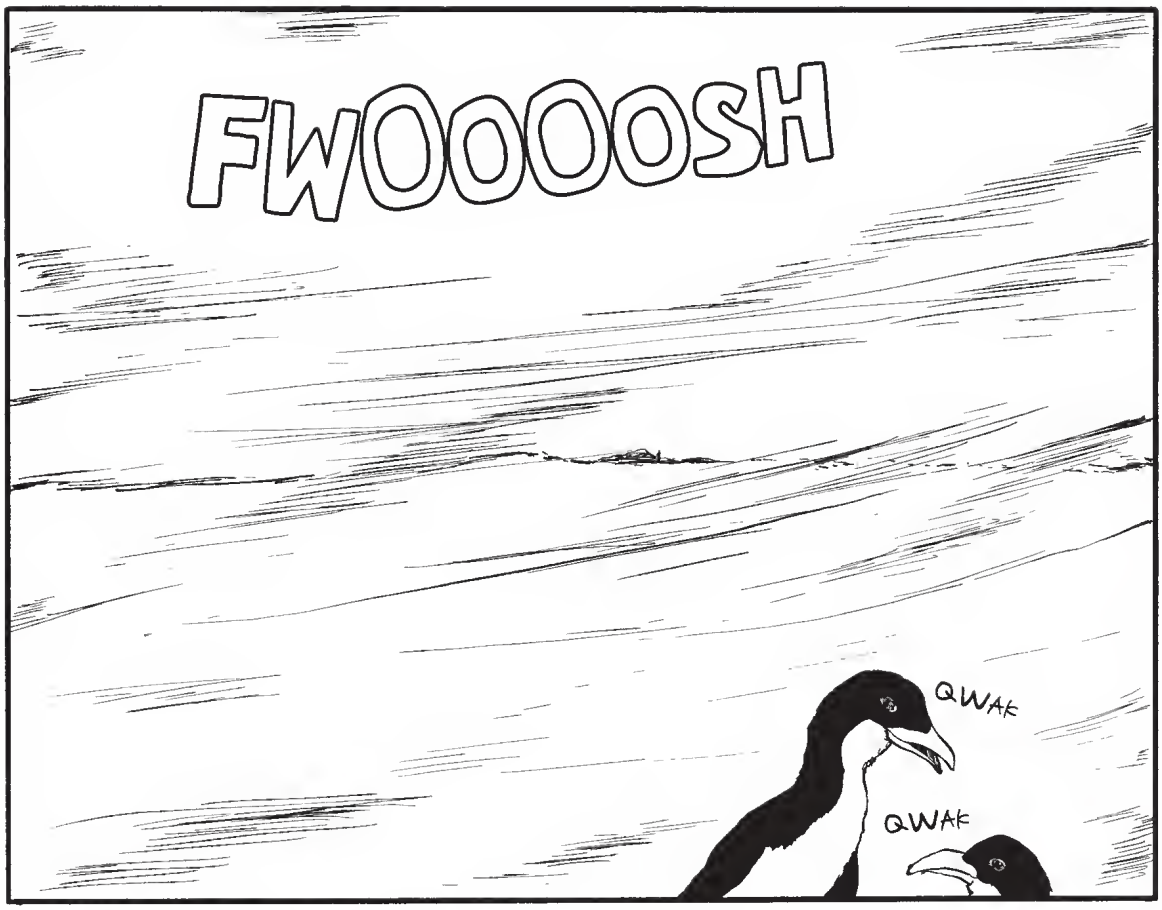
WITH FACIAL STRUCTURE, FOR EXAMPLE, YOU MIGHT HAVE A PERSON WHOSE BROW AND NOSE RESEMBLE THAT OF THEIR FATHER, WHILE THEIR EYES AND JAWLINE MATCH THAT OF THEIR MOTHER. THIS PERSON HAS INHERITED THESE FACIAL FEATURES FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE PARENTS. NOW LET'S IMAGINE YOU HAVE AN ANGELFOLK FATHER AND A GOATFOLK MOTHER. WOULD THAT MEAN THEIR CHILD WOULD HAVE BOTH WINGS AND HORNS? THE ANSWER IS NO-- THE CHILD WOULD HAVE *EITHER* WINGS *OR* HORNS. IN OTHER WORDS, THE CHILD WE BE BORN EITHER AS AN ANGELFOLK OR A GOATFOLK (THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS, BUT WE'LL SAVE THOSE FOR LATER). WHY MIGHT THAT BE?

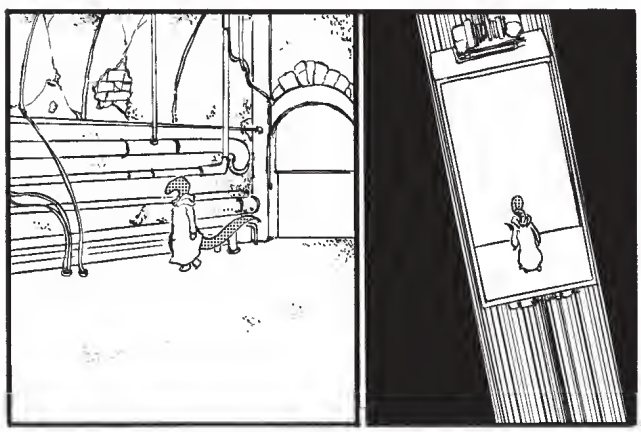


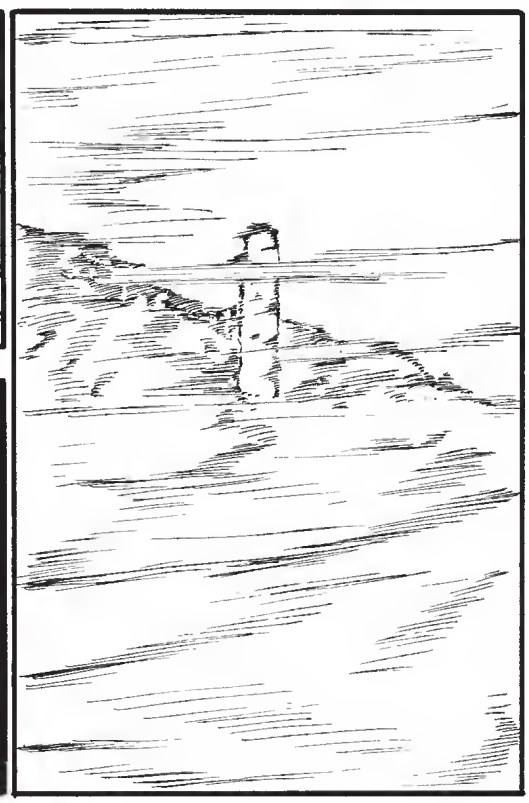
FACIAL COMPOSITION IS A MIXTURE OF FEATURES PASSED DOWN FROM BOTH PARENTS.

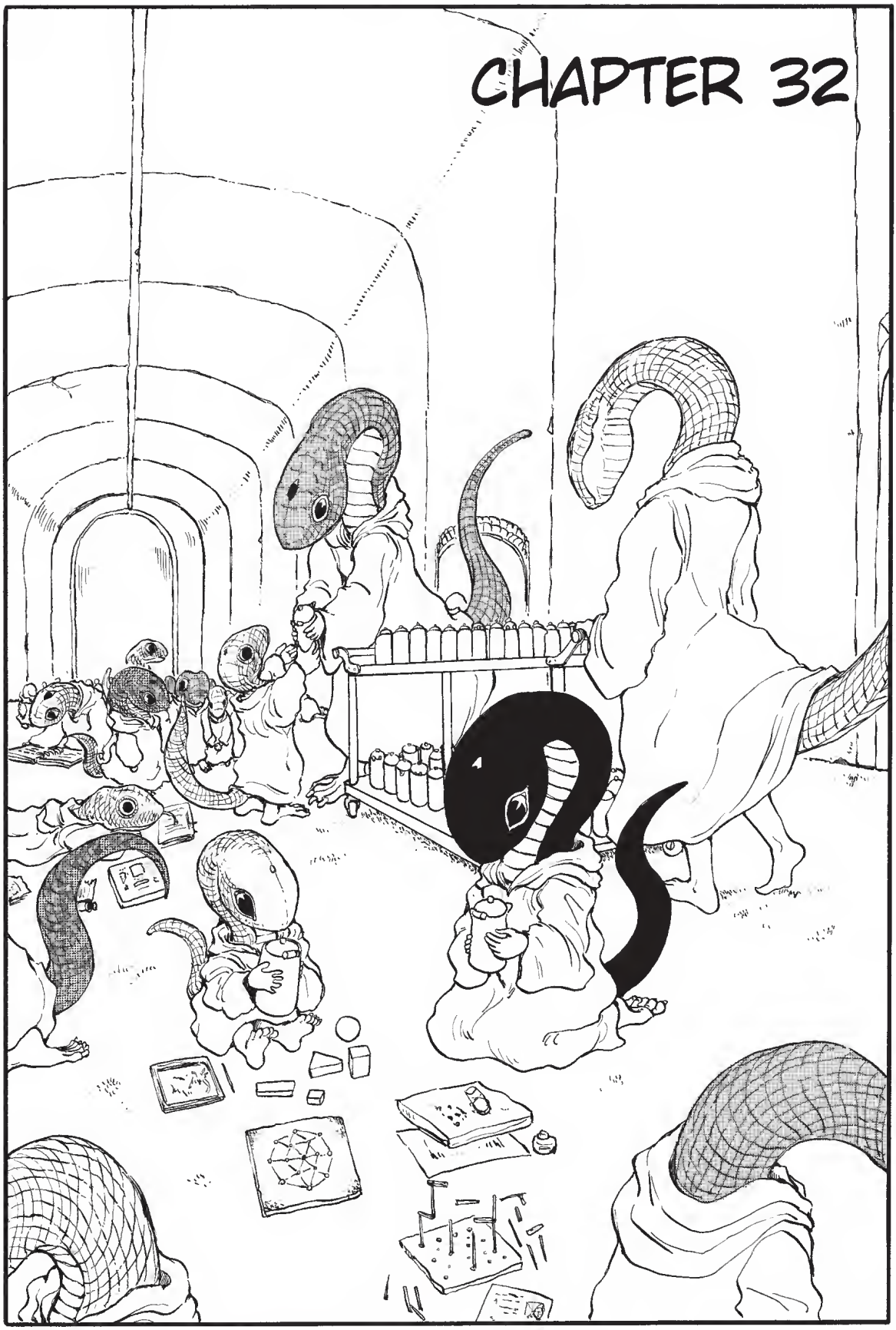


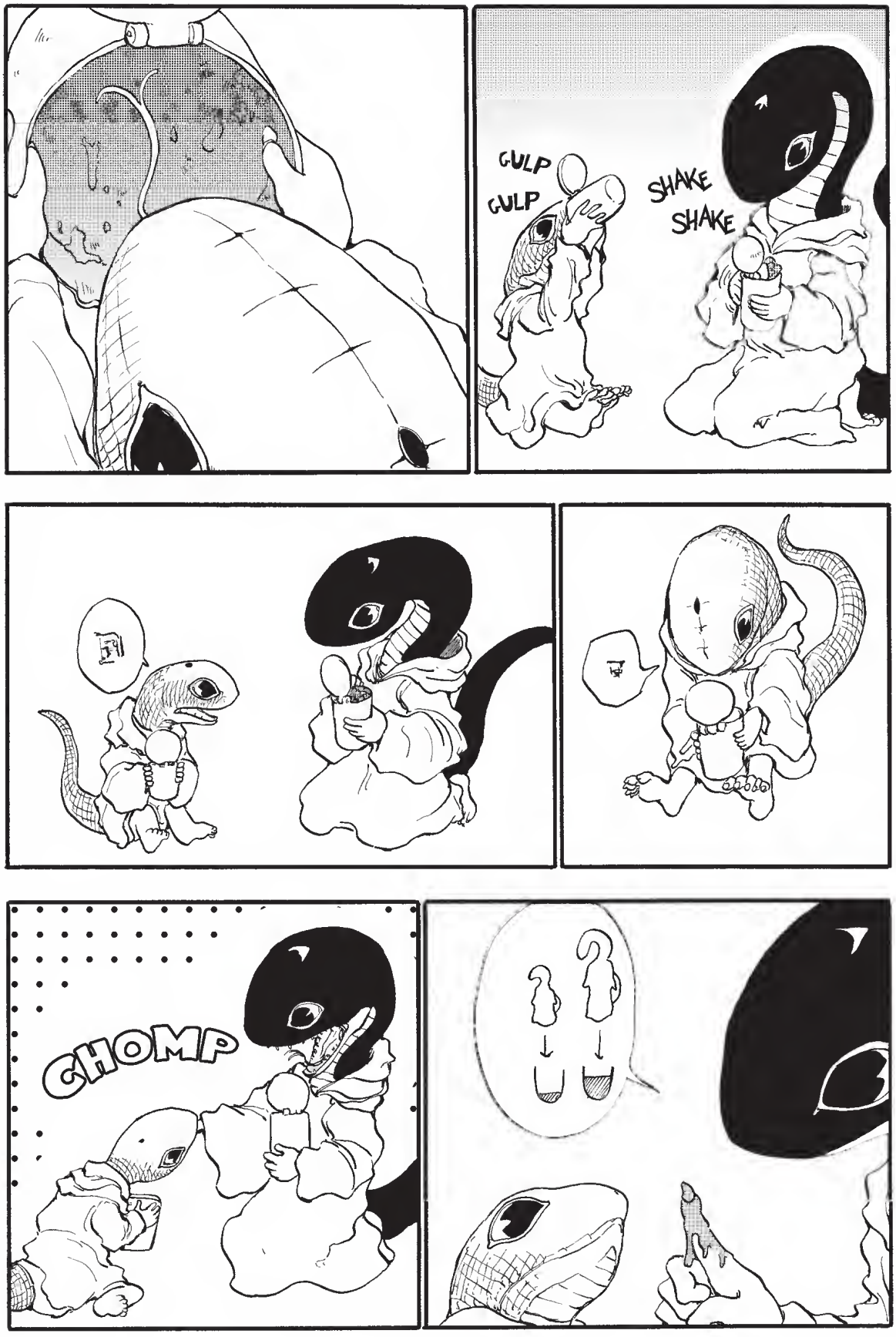
HUMAN MORPHOLOGY, MEANWHILE, IS GENERALLY NOT MIXED... THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS, HOWEVER, WHICH WE WILL COVER LATER.

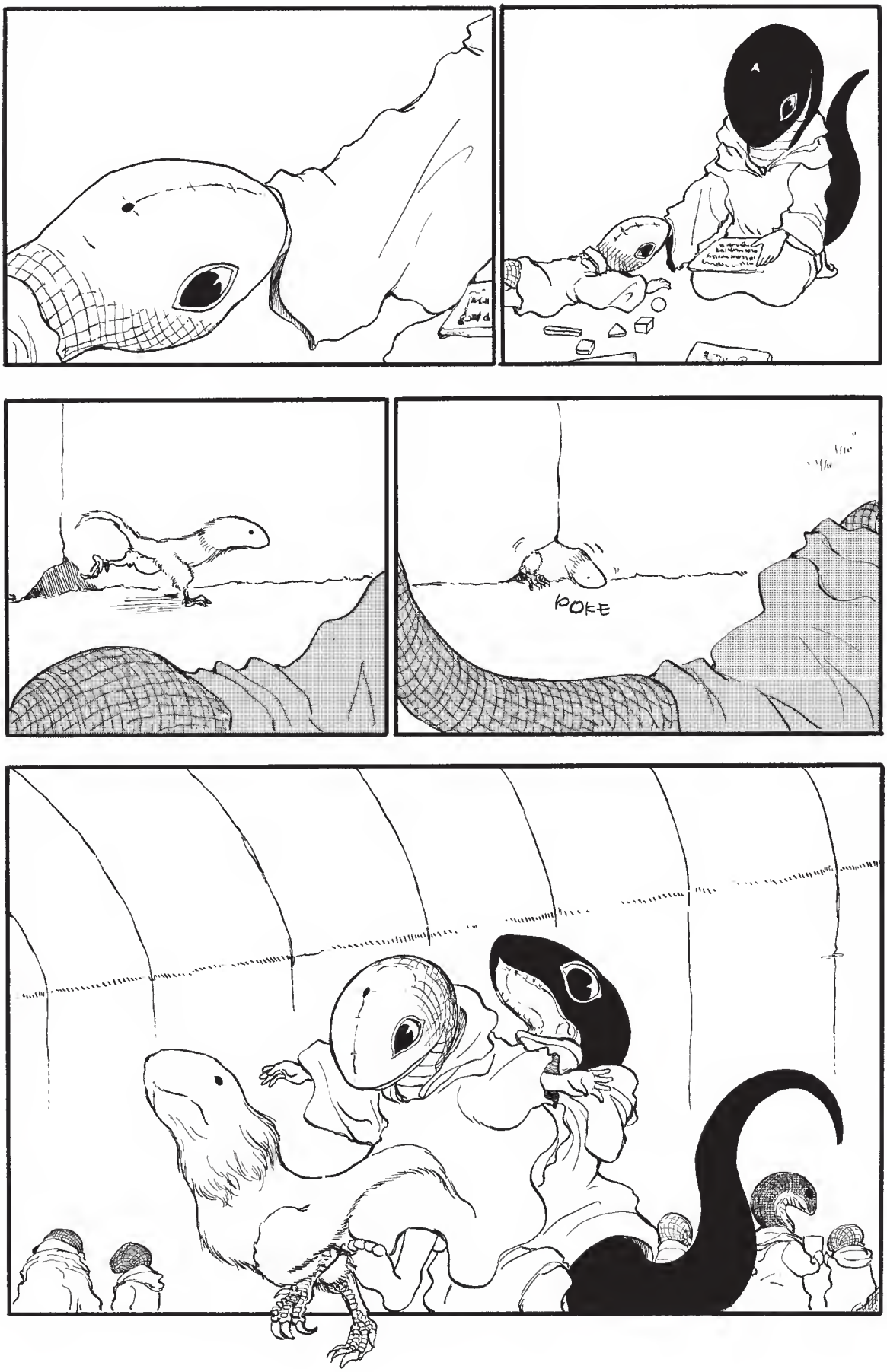

FWOOOOSH
QWAK
QWAK

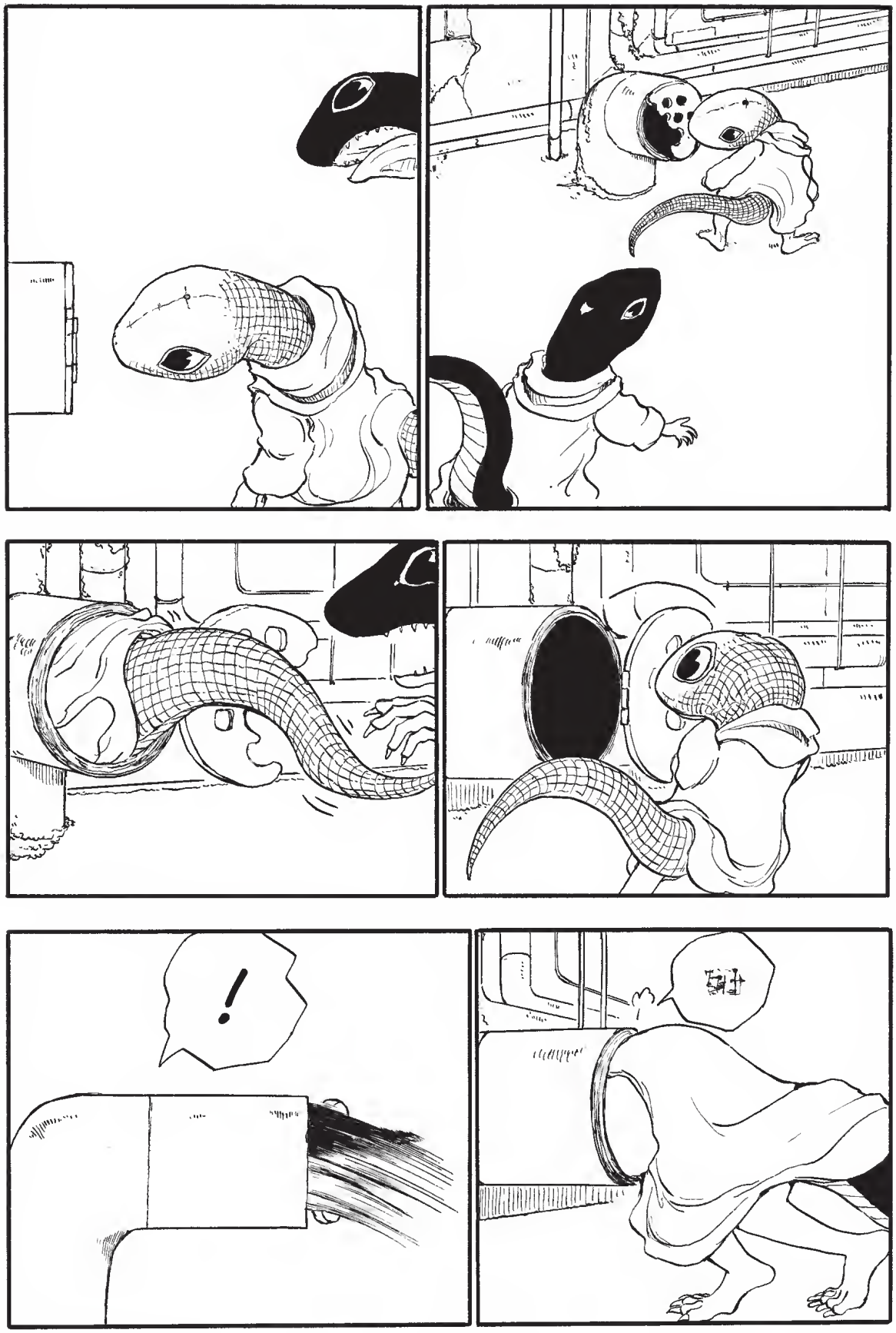




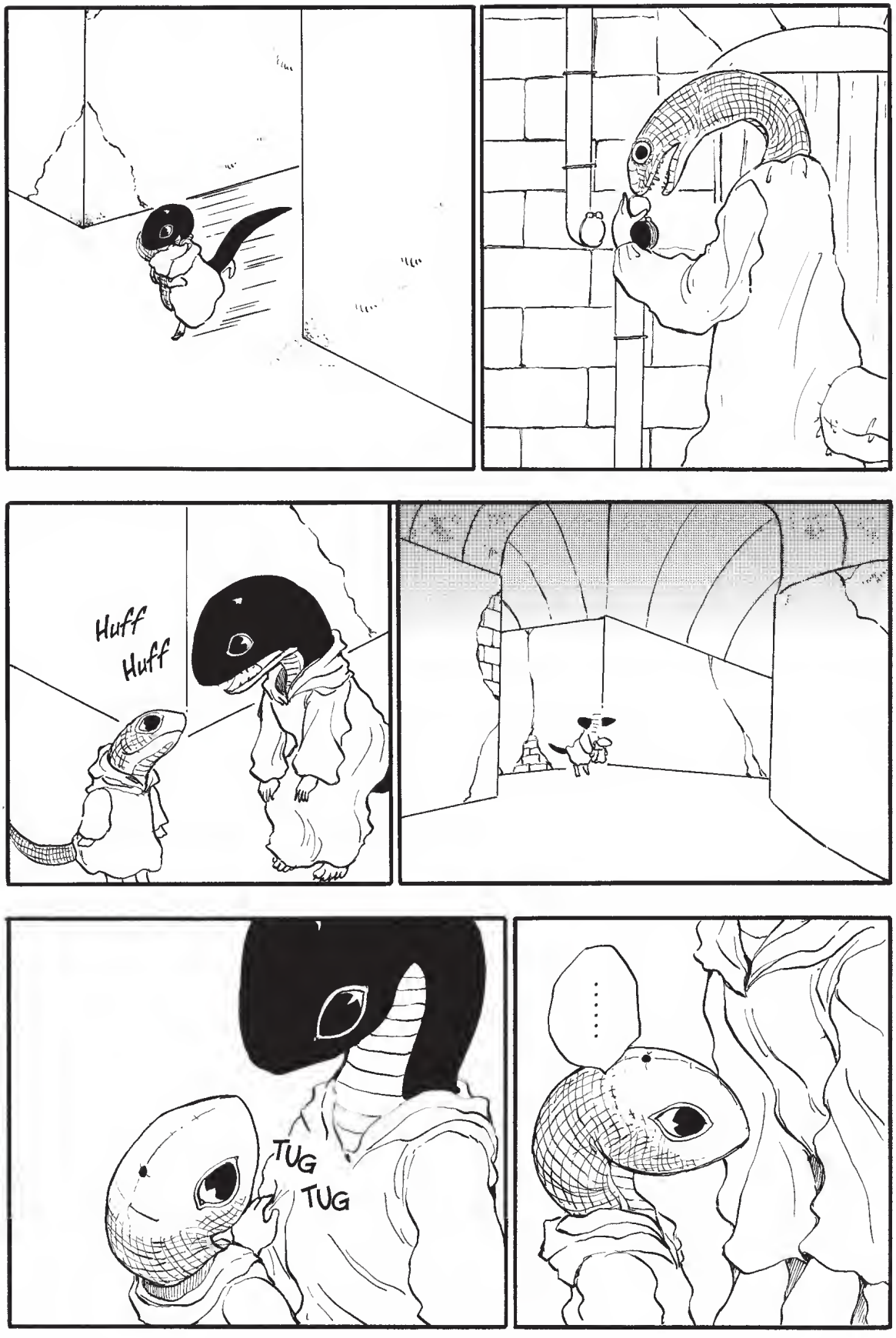

CHAPTER 32

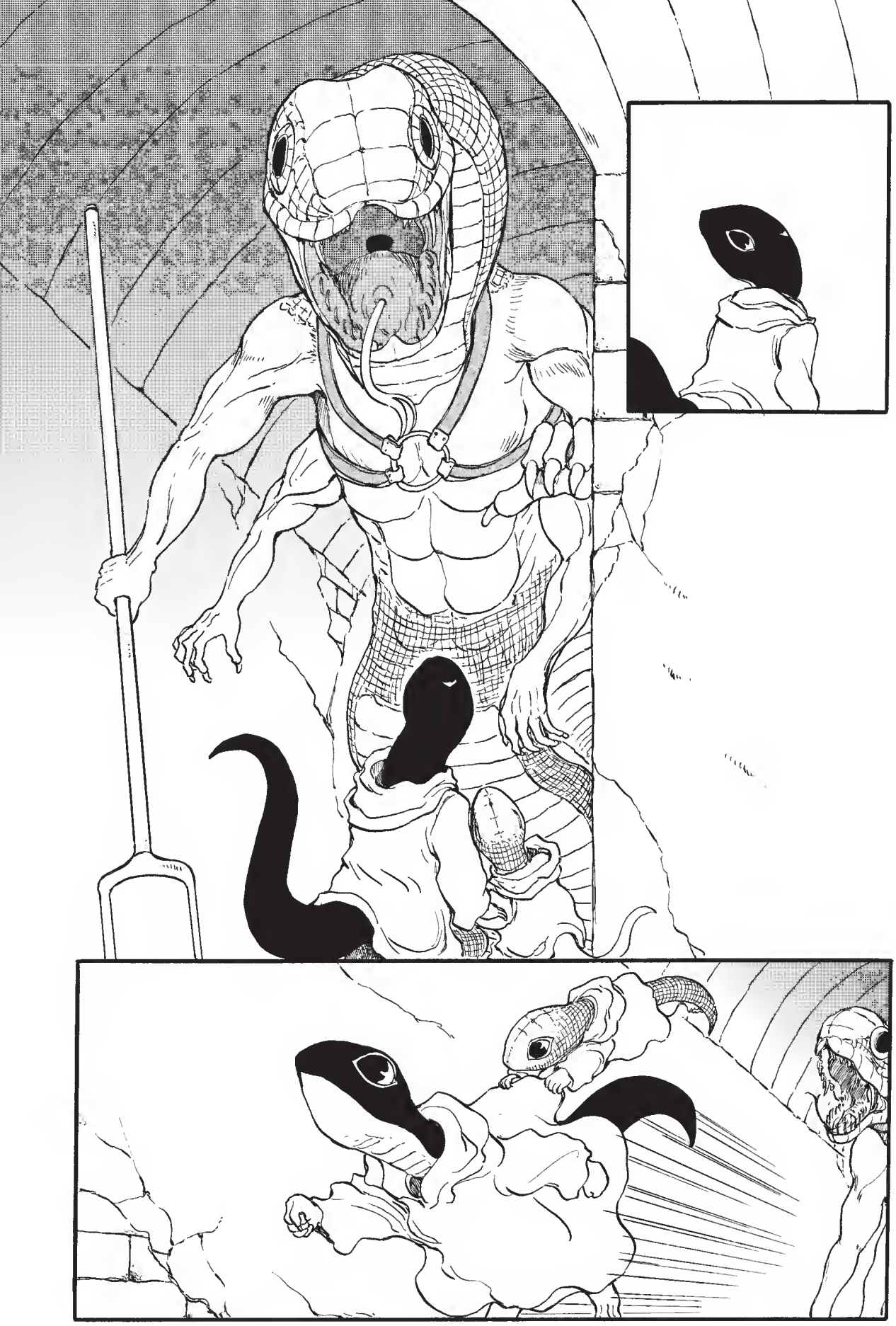

GULP
GULP
SHAKE
SHAKE
CHOMP


POKE

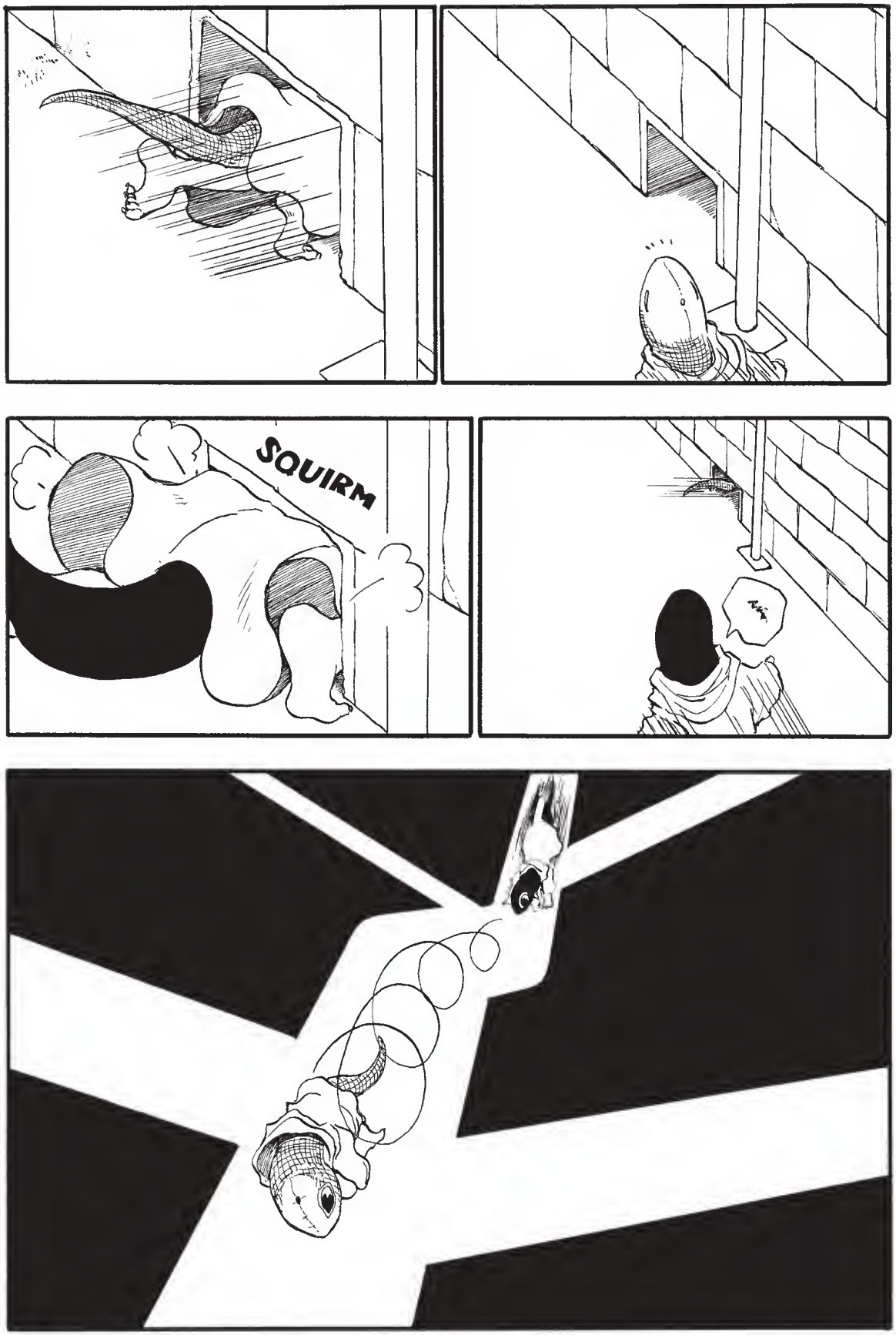

!
냄새

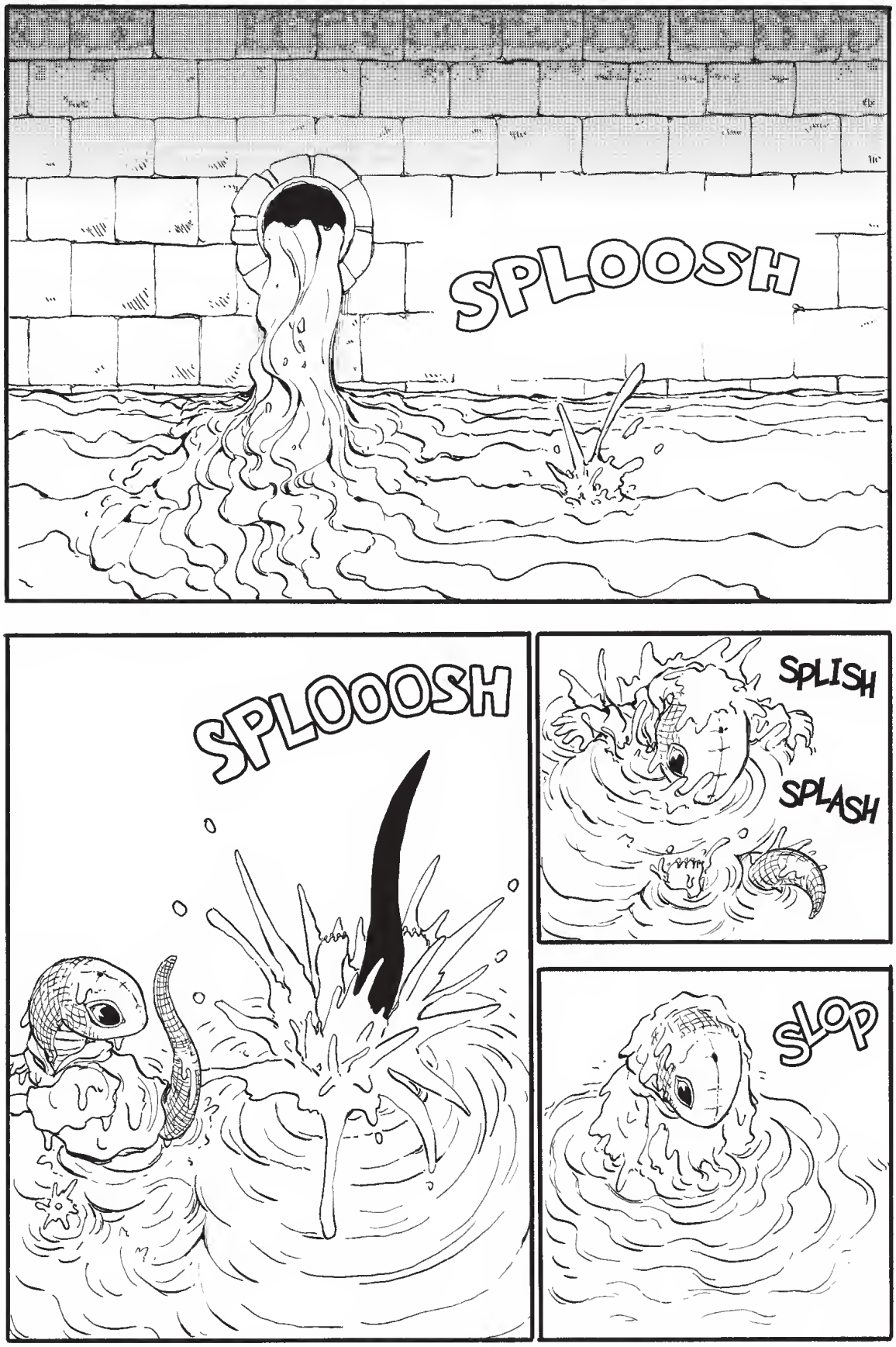
SHOOMP
BONK
BONK
CRASH

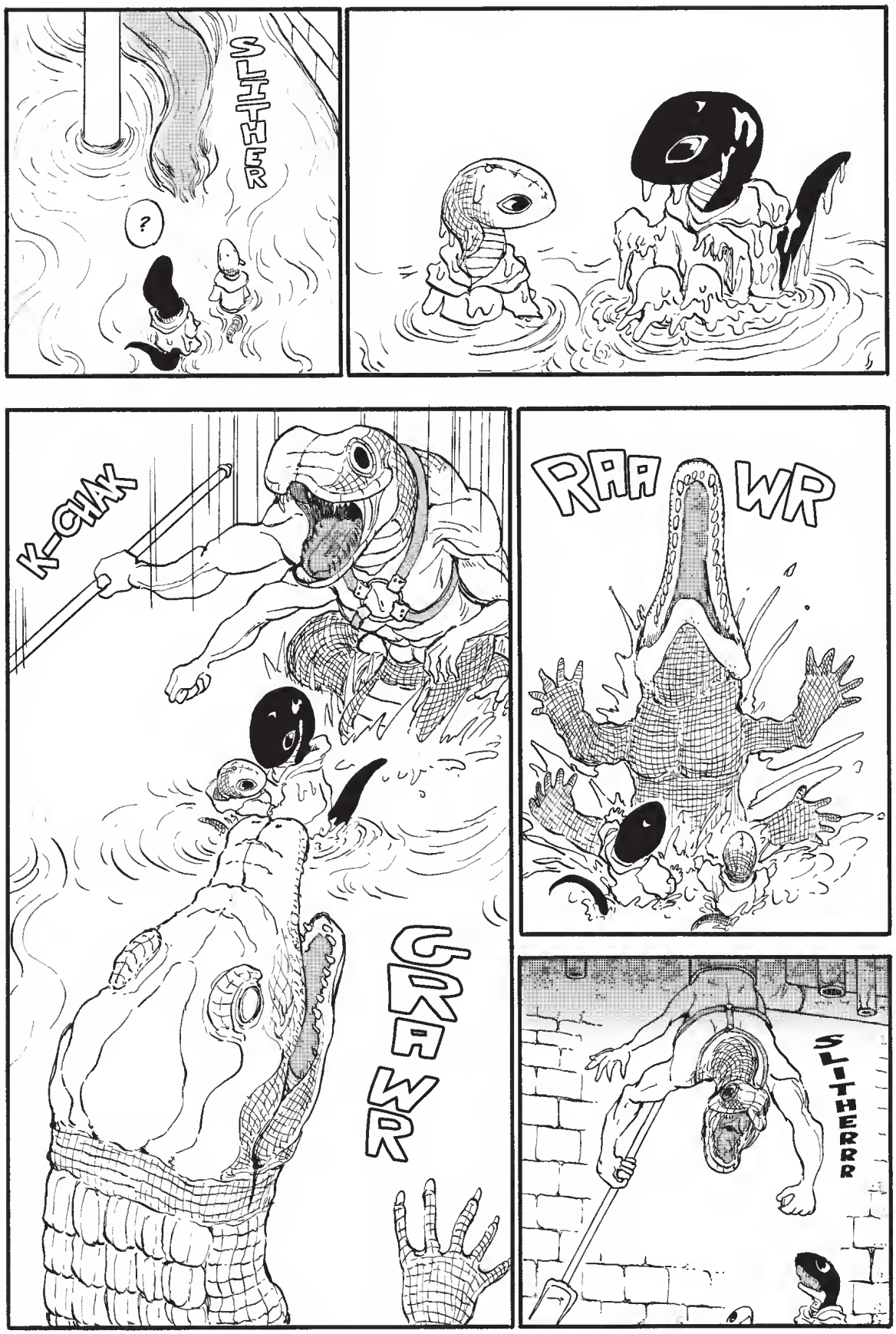

Huff
Huff
TUG
TUG
.....

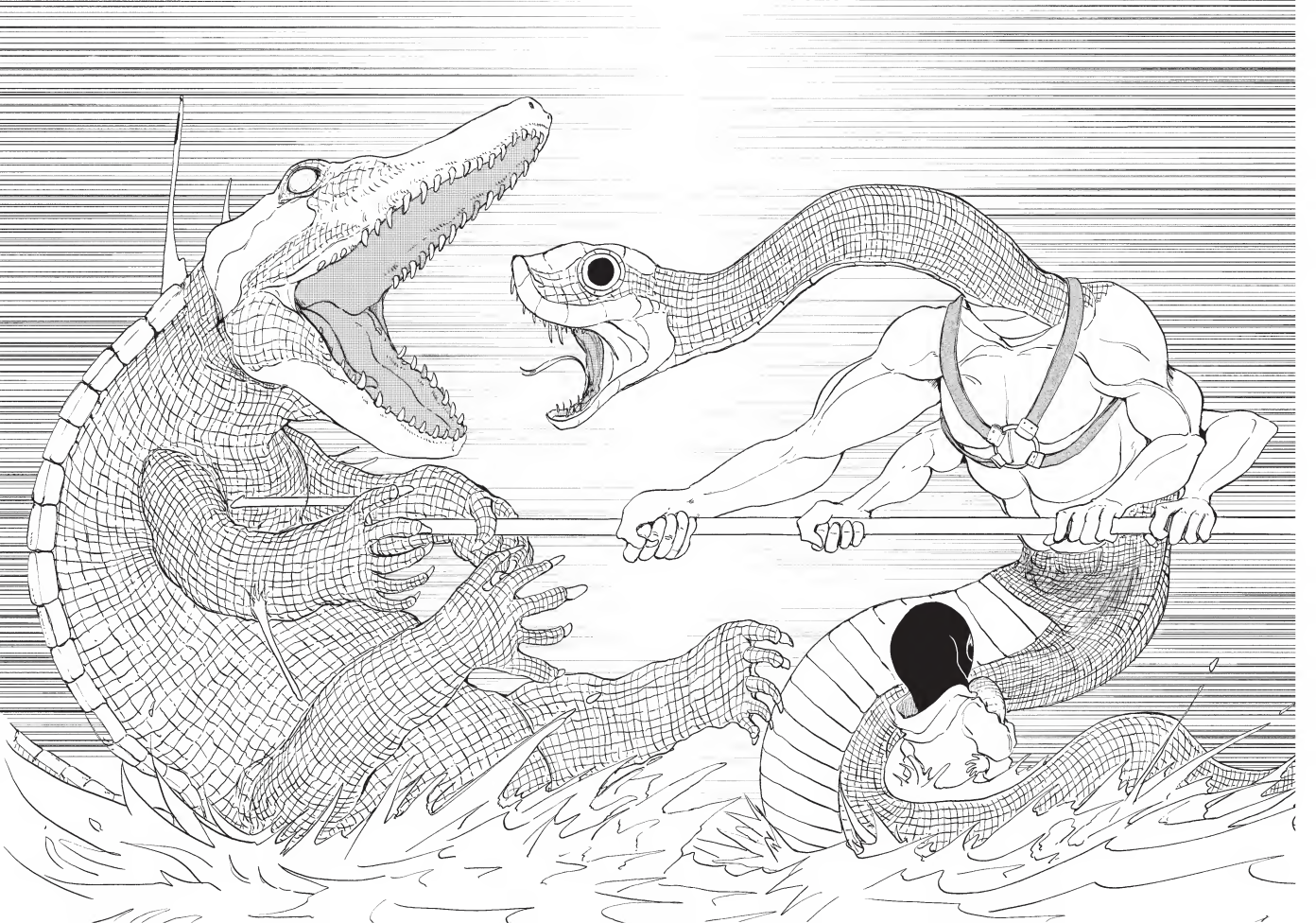


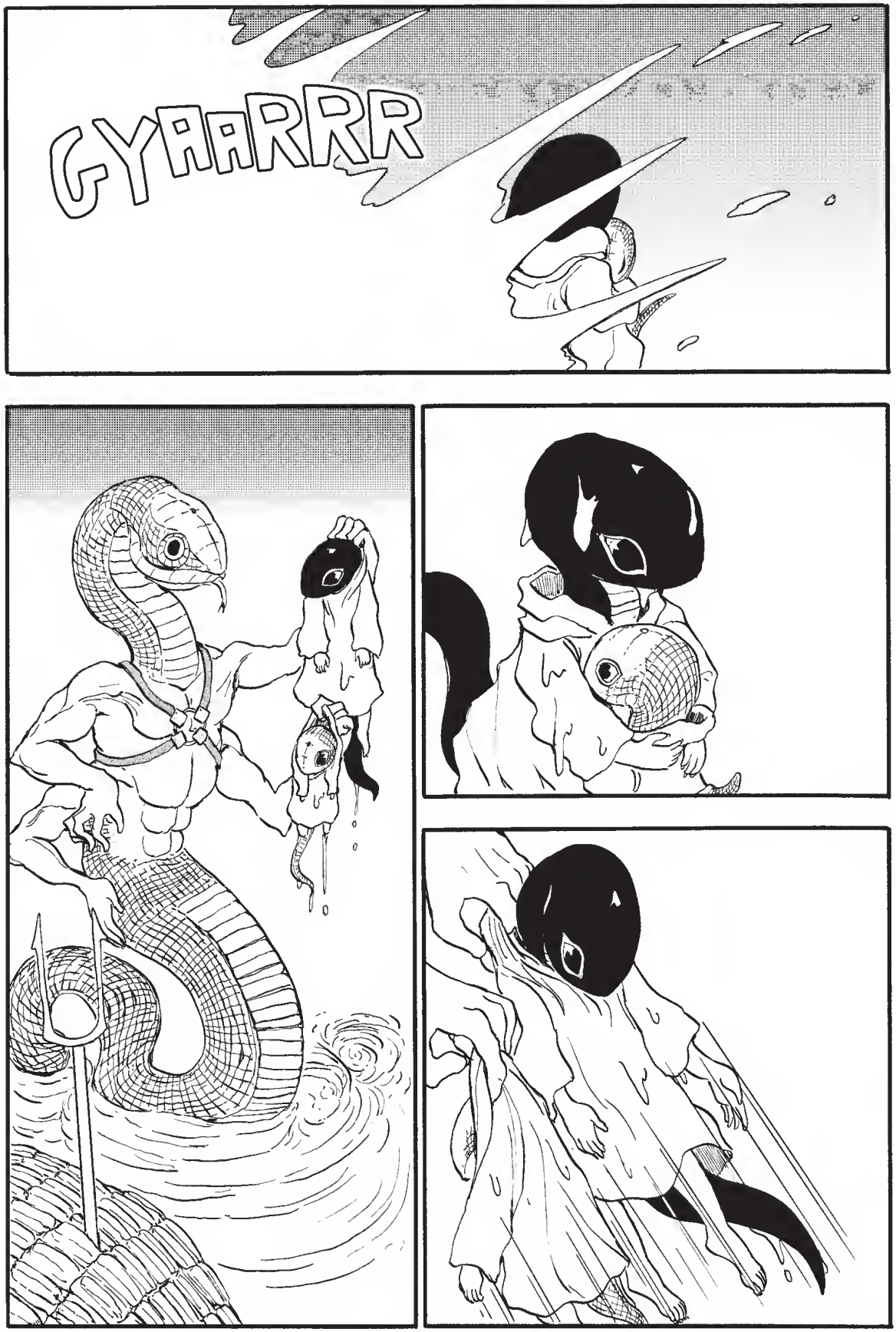
TMP TMP TMP
SLITHER
SLITHER

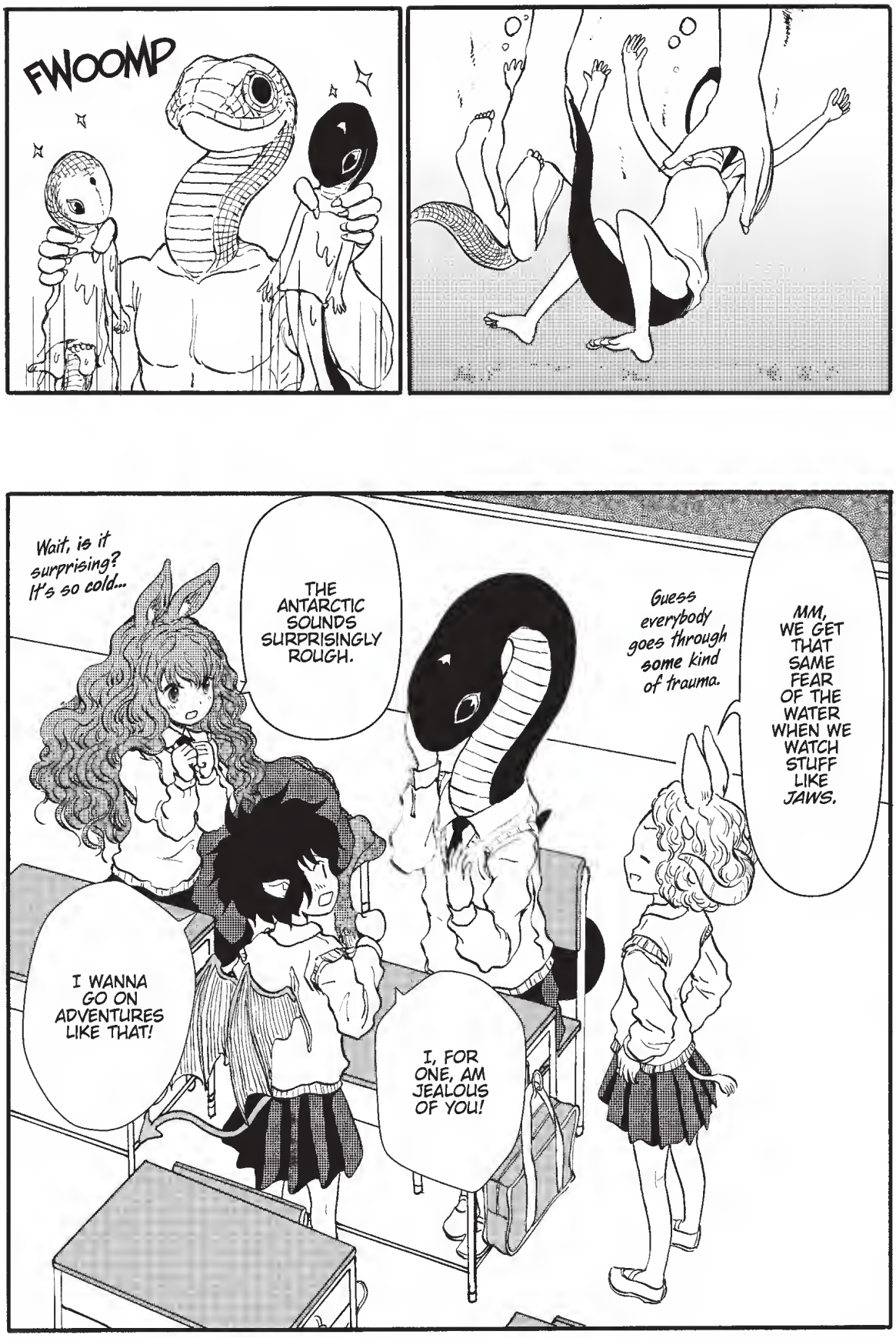

SQUIRM


SPLOOSH
SPLOOOSH
SPLISH
SPLASH
SLOP


SLITHER
?
K-CHAK
RAA WR
GRA WR
SLITHERRR




GYAARRR


FWOOMP
Wait, is it surprising? It's so cold...
THE ANTARCTIC SOUNDS SURPRISINGLY ROUGH.
Guess everybody goes through some kind of trauma.
MM, WE GET THAT SAME FEAR OF THE WATER WHEN WE WATCH STUFF LIKE JAWS.
I WANNA GO ON ADVENTURES LIKE THAT!
I, FOR ONE, AM JEALOUS OF YOU!

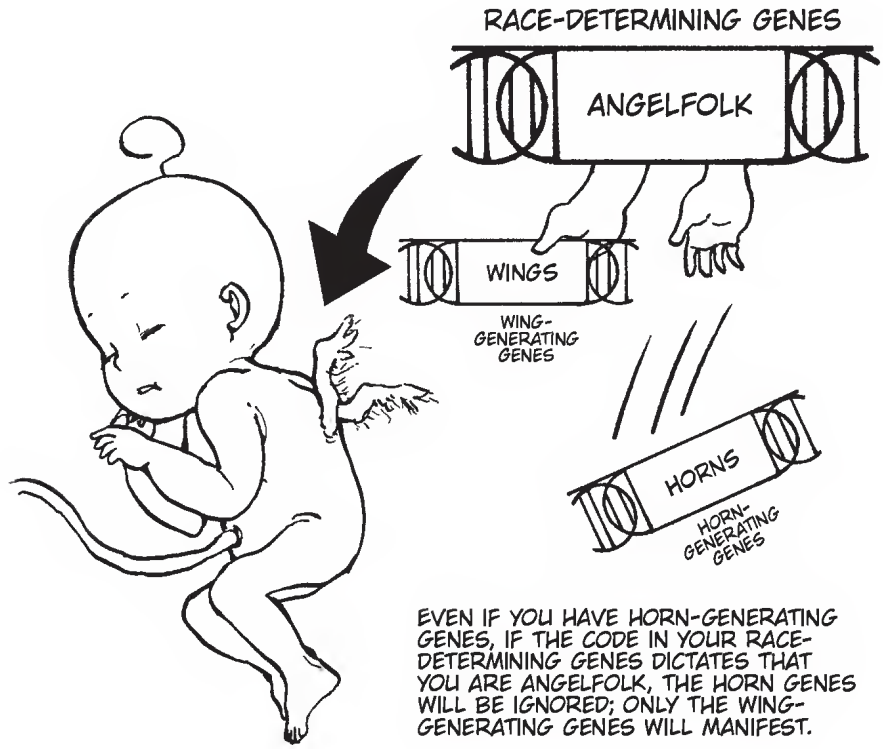
A CentaUr's Life

GENETICS MADE EASY: LESSON 3
A SYSTEM FOR PASSING DOWN CHARACTERISTICS

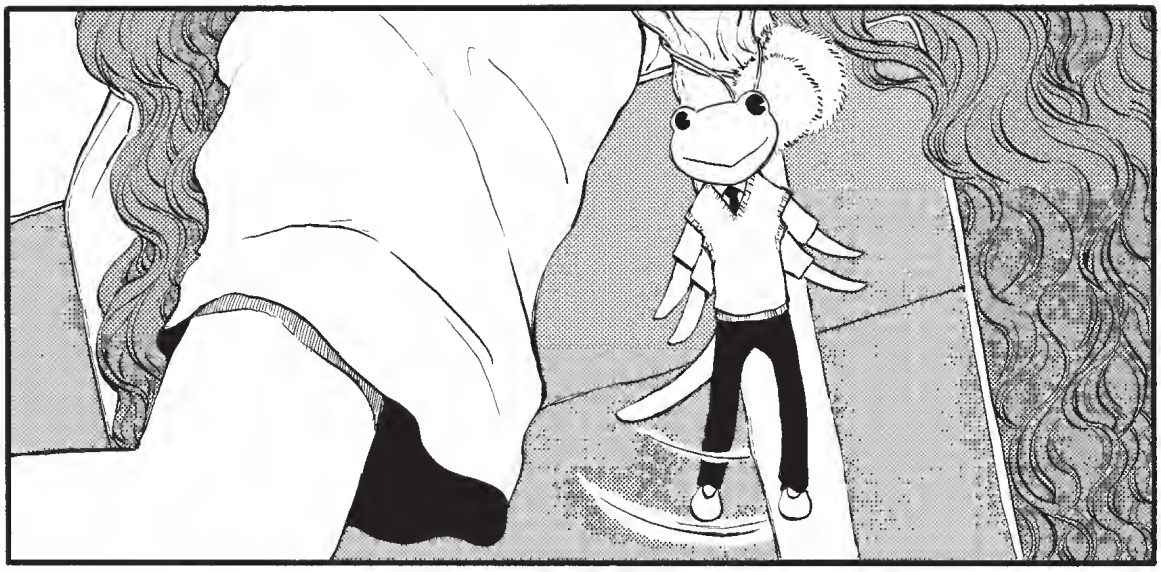
PREVIOUSLY, WE NOTED THAT IT IS GENES THAT MAKE HEREDITY POSSIBLE. GENES ARE INFORMATION STORED IN YOUR DNA--THE NUCLEIC ACID FOUND IN THE CELLS THAT MAKE UP YOUR BODY. DNA IS COMPOSED OF FOUR BASE SUBSTANCES (ADENINE, GUANINE, CYTOSINE, AND THYMINE), THE ARRANGEMENT OF WHICH FORMS A SORT OF CODE, WORKING LIKE A COMPUTER PROGRAM TO RECORD THE TRAITS OF A LIVING THING.

WITHIN THESE GENES LIE THE CODES THAT CREATE HORNS OR WINGS. SO WHY IS IT, THEN, THAT A CHILD WHO HAS RECEIVED THE GENES TO MAKE WINGS FROM A PARENT WOULD THEN GO ON TO BE BORN A WINGLESS GOATFOLK?

THE ANSWER IS THAT WITHIN YOUR GENES, THERE IS A PARTICULAR CODE WHICH ULTIMATELY DETERMINES YOUR RACE (RACE-DETERMINING GENES). IF THIS CODE DETERMINES THAT YOU ARE ANGELFOLK, THEN YOU WILL NOT BE BORN WITH HORNS, EVEN IF YOU HAVE THE GENE FOR HORNS. ONLY YOUR WING GENES WILL FUNCTION. CONVERSELY, IF YOUR RACE-DETERMINING GENES DICTATE THAT YOU ARE GOATFOLK, YOUR WING-GENERATING GENES WILL BE IGNORED.

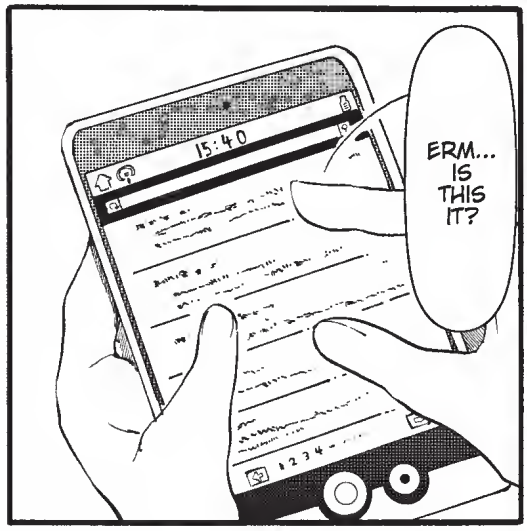


EVEN IF YOU HAVE HORN-GENERATING GENES, IF THE CODE IN YOUR RACE-DETERMINING GENES DICTATES THAT YOU ARE ANGELFOLK, THE HORN GENES WILL BE IGNORED; ONLY THE WING-GENERATING GENES WILL MANIFEST.



HEH HEH!
OH, HIME, YOU'VE GOT A SMART-PHONE TOO?

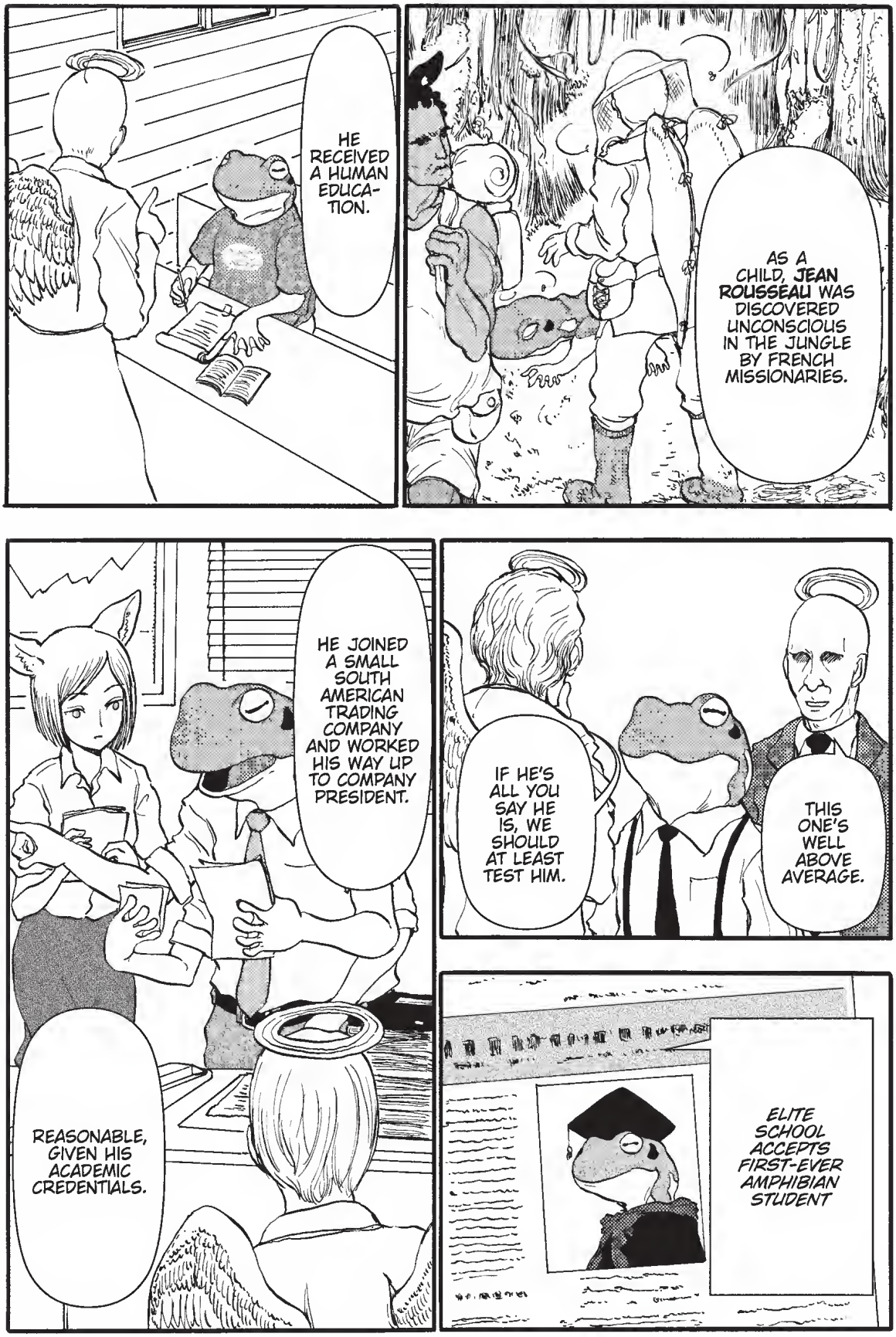
HRMM...


15:40
ERM... IS THIS IT?

CHAPTER 33

15:41
...PLANT THAT ONLY GROWS IN THE DEPTHS OF THE JUNGLE...
...JUST THE RIGHT MIXTURE OF ESSENCES TO... ...YOUR HEALTH WITH ALL-NATURAL...
SKIP AD IN 5 SECONDS

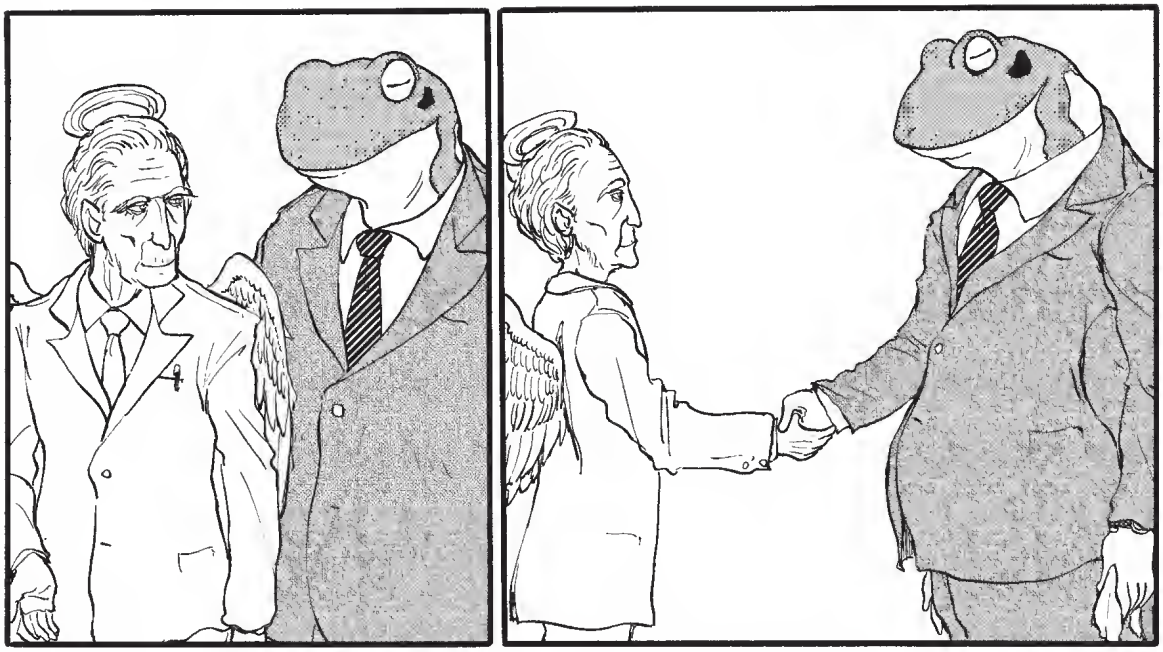
ALWAYS BY YOUR SIDE. YOUR PARTNER IN HEALT
SURE DO SEE THIS FROG GUY A LOT LATELY.
...A FRAGRANT SCENT WITH NO ARTIFICIAL ADDITIVES...
THESE STUPID ADS.
THEN WHAT ARE THEY?
AM-PHIBIAN-FOLK, I GUESS?
KIND OF A MOUTH-FUL.
I DON'T THINK "FROG GUY" IS THE APPROPRIATE TERM.
HE IS A FRENCH NATIONAL, AFTER ALL.
YOU COULD ALWAYS CALL HIM "FRENCH."

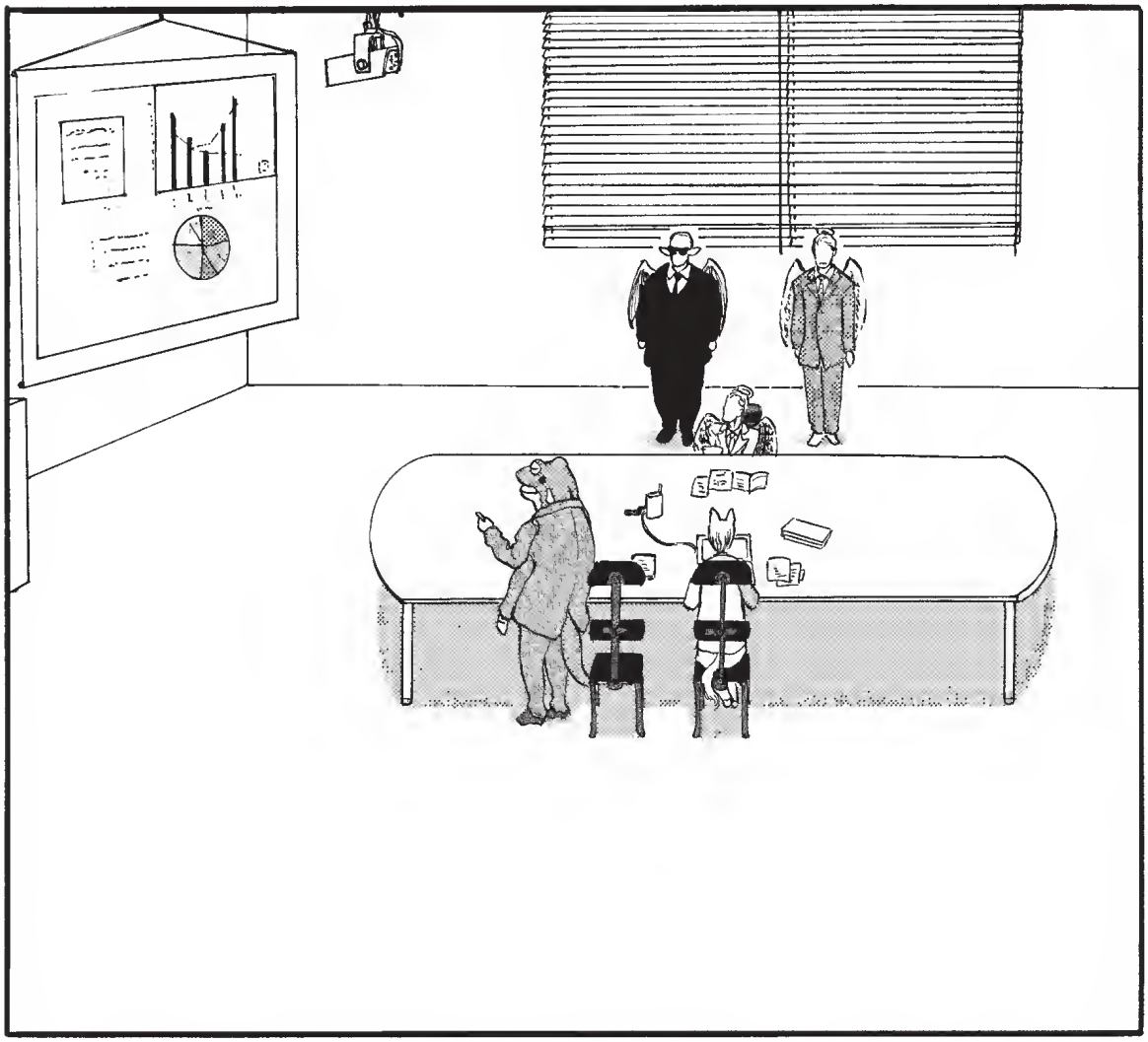

HE RECEIVED A HUMAN EDUCATION.
AS A CHILD, JEAN ROUSSEAU WAS DISCOVERED UNCONSCIOUS IN THE JUNGLE BY FRENCH MISSIONARIES.
HE JOINED A SMALL SOUTH AMERICAN TRADING COMPANY AND WORKED HIS WAY UP TO COMPANY PRESIDENT.
REASONABLE, GIVEN HIS ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS.
IF HE'S ALL YOU SAY HE IS, WE SHOULD AT LEAST TEST HIM.
THIS ONE'S WELL ABOVE AVERAGE.
ELITE SCHOOL ACCEPTS FIRST-EVER AMPHIBIAN STUDENT

THEY PUT THE CEO IN THEIR COMMERCIALS?
WELL, HE'S HAD A LOT OF MEDIA EXPOSURE THANKS TO MINORITY PROTECTION CAMPAIGNS AND SO FORTH.
ROUSSEAU BUYS OUT UNDER-PERFORMING PARENT COMPANY, BECOMES CONGLOMERATE CEO.
I GUESS AMPHIBIAN-FOLK ARE REALLY SMART.
I DON'T THINK IT WORKS LIKE THAT.
YOU GET SMART ONES AND DUMB ONES WITH ANY RACE.
TEN MORE SEC-ONDS.
59.
60.
61.
62.
63.

THAT'S PERFECT!
Aaand that's a tie.
Hey, wait a sec!
OH, YOU GIRLS ARE INTERESTED IN JEAN ROUSSEAU?
IF YOU THINK WE FIT THE BILL.
HEY!!
MR. ROUSSEAU IS COMING TO OUR SCHOOL FOR A LECTURE.
COULD I ASK YOU ALL TO BE ON THE PREPARATION COMMITTEE?
WOW, OUR SCHOOL'S THE PLACE TO BE THESE DAYS, HUH?
NOT AT ALL.
No, that's not it.
OH DEAR, DID I SAY IT WRONG?

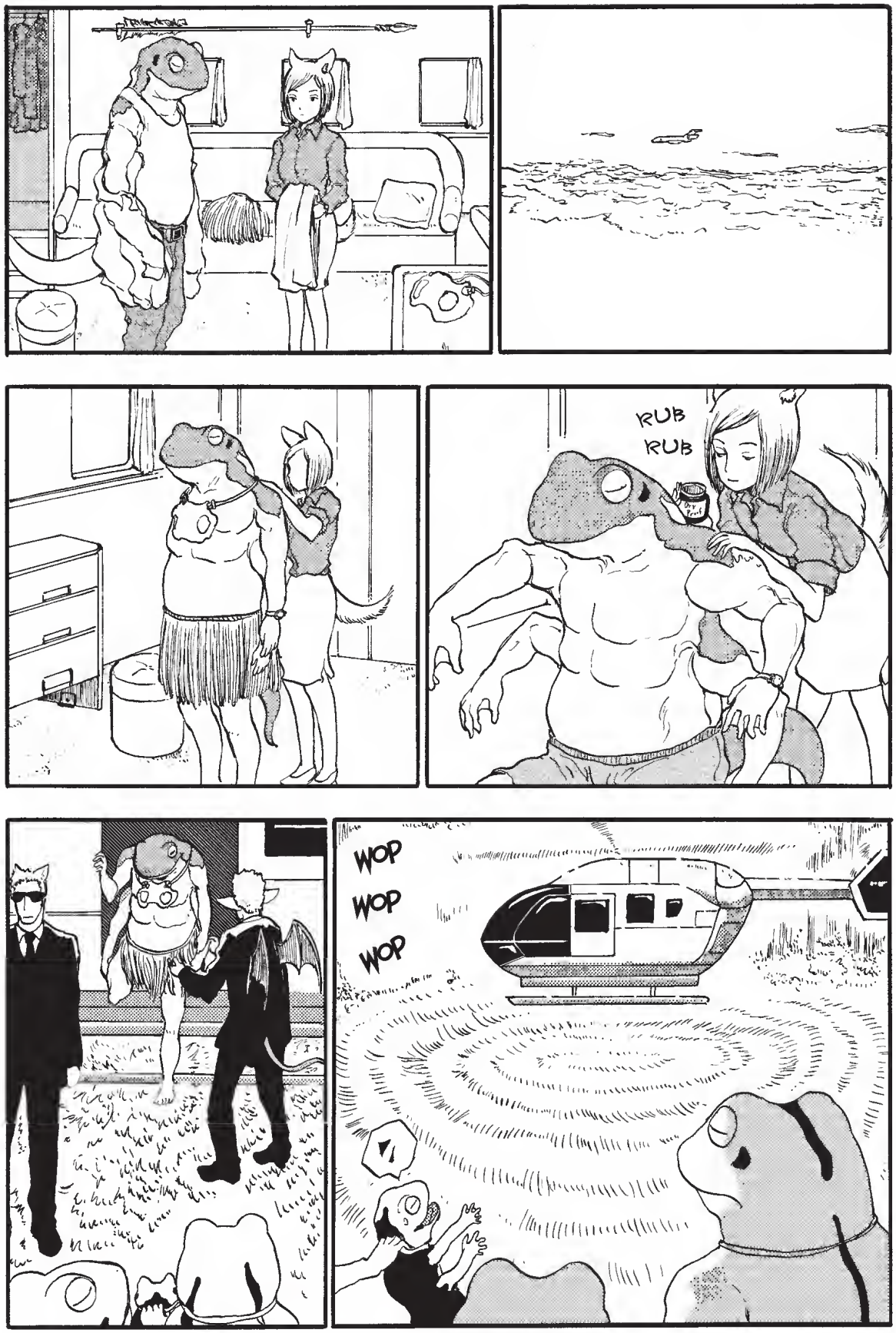
DON'T YOU SUPPOSE IT'S RUDE TO SHAKE HANDS WITH YOUR GLOVES STILL ON?
BUT MY HANDS ARE...

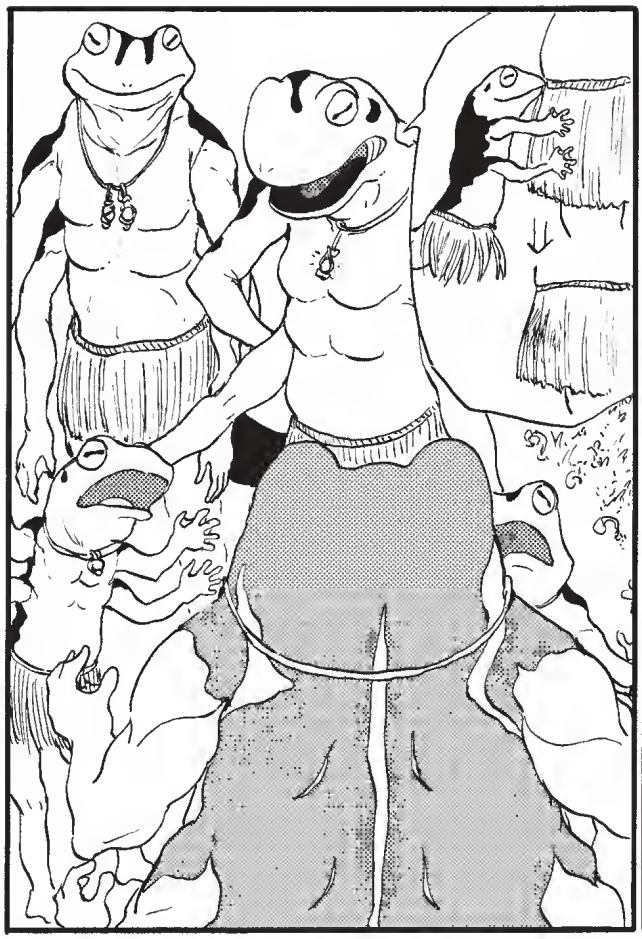


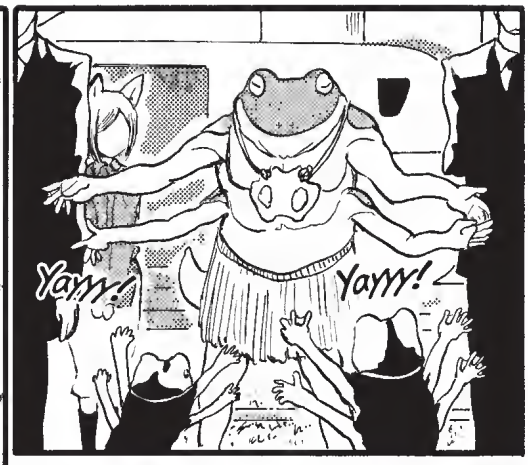


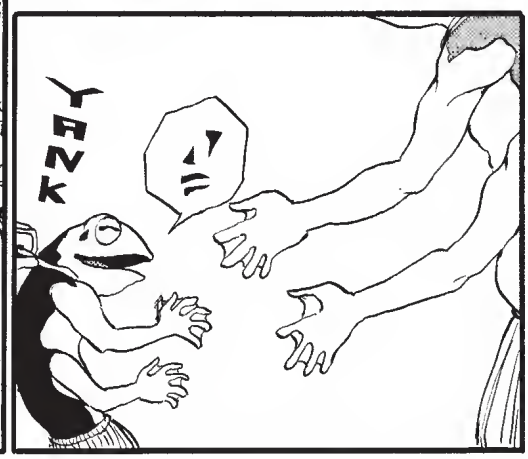
MY HANDS AREN'T DIRTY.
SWIP
YOU HAVE MUCH TO LEARN.
BUT, SIR, THE--

THE MEETING WENT LONG, SO WE DON'T HAVE ANY DOWN-TIME.
A CHANGE OF CLOTHES HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR YOU ON BOARD.
WEATHER CONDITIONS ARE FAVOR-ABLE. WE SHOULD ARRIVE IN THREE HOURS.
WE'LL HAVE A HELICOPTER WAITING FOR US AT THE AIRPORT.
MM-HM.
THE SETTLEMENT DOCS AND OTHER PAPER-WORK ARE PREPARED AS WELL.
THERE ARE FOUR ITEMS THAT NEED A DECISION BY **END** OF DAY.
BUT IF THIS BLEEDS INTO TOMORROW WE'LL HAVE TO CANCEL OTHER APPOINTMENTS.
WHAT'S MY FIRST APPOINT-MENT TOMORROW MORNING?
YOU'VE GOT THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL...
THERE'S NOTHING SCHEDULED *AFTER* THAT TODAY, CORRECT?
THAT'S CORRECT.

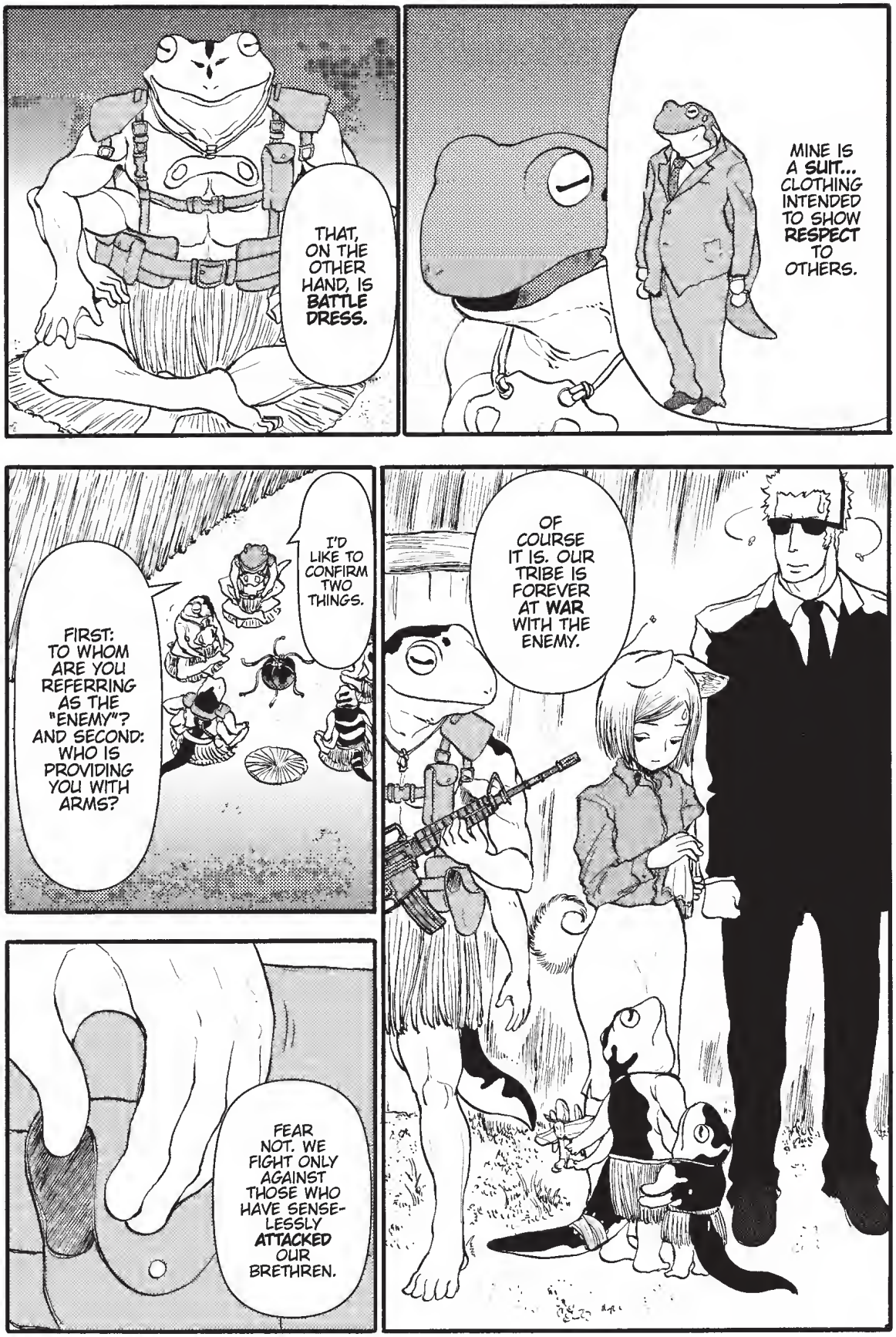

RUB
RUB
WOP
WOP
WOP




Yayy!
Yayy!

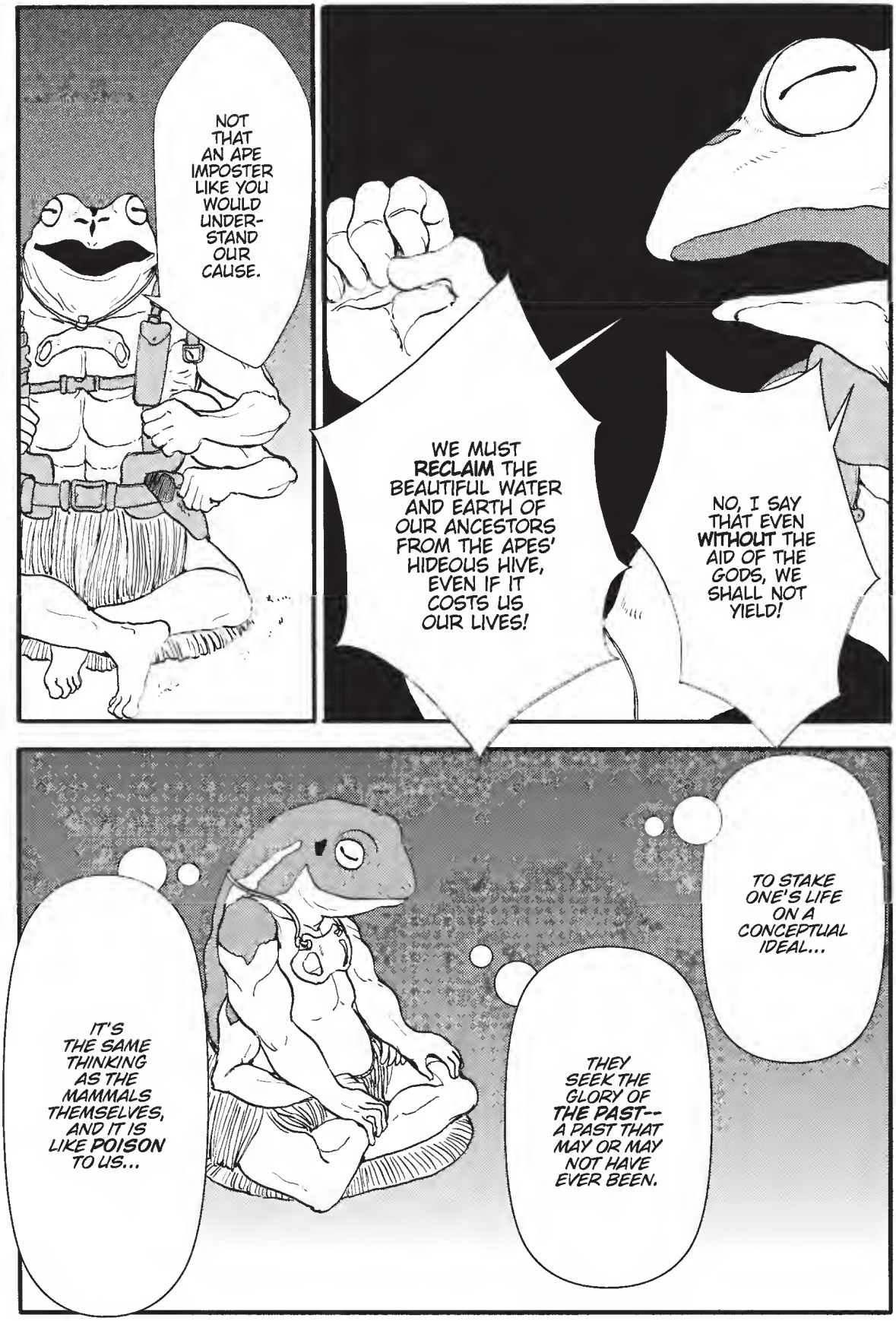

YANK

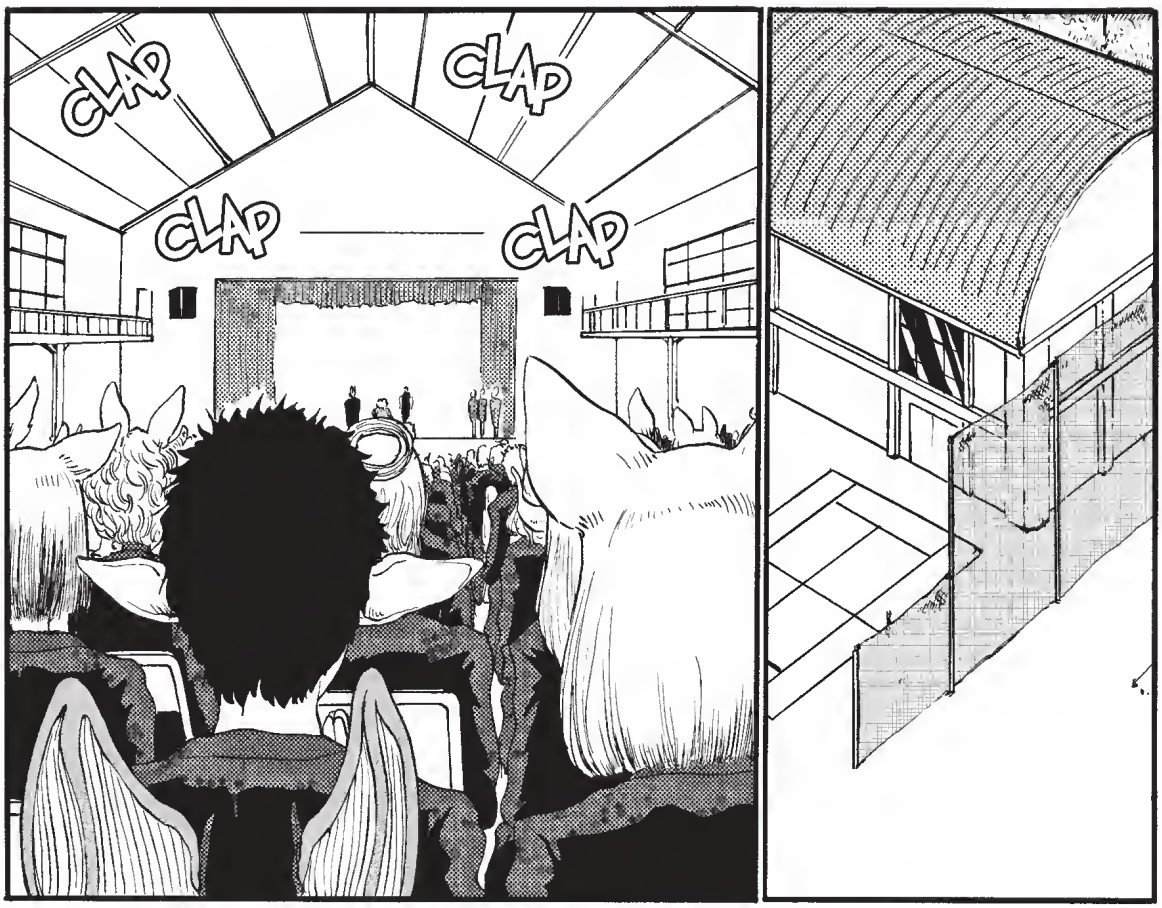
YOU FIND IT STRANGE? AND YET, YOU'RE THE ONE ALWAYS PLAYING **DRESS-UP** IN THOSE APE CLOTHES.
WHY THE GARB?

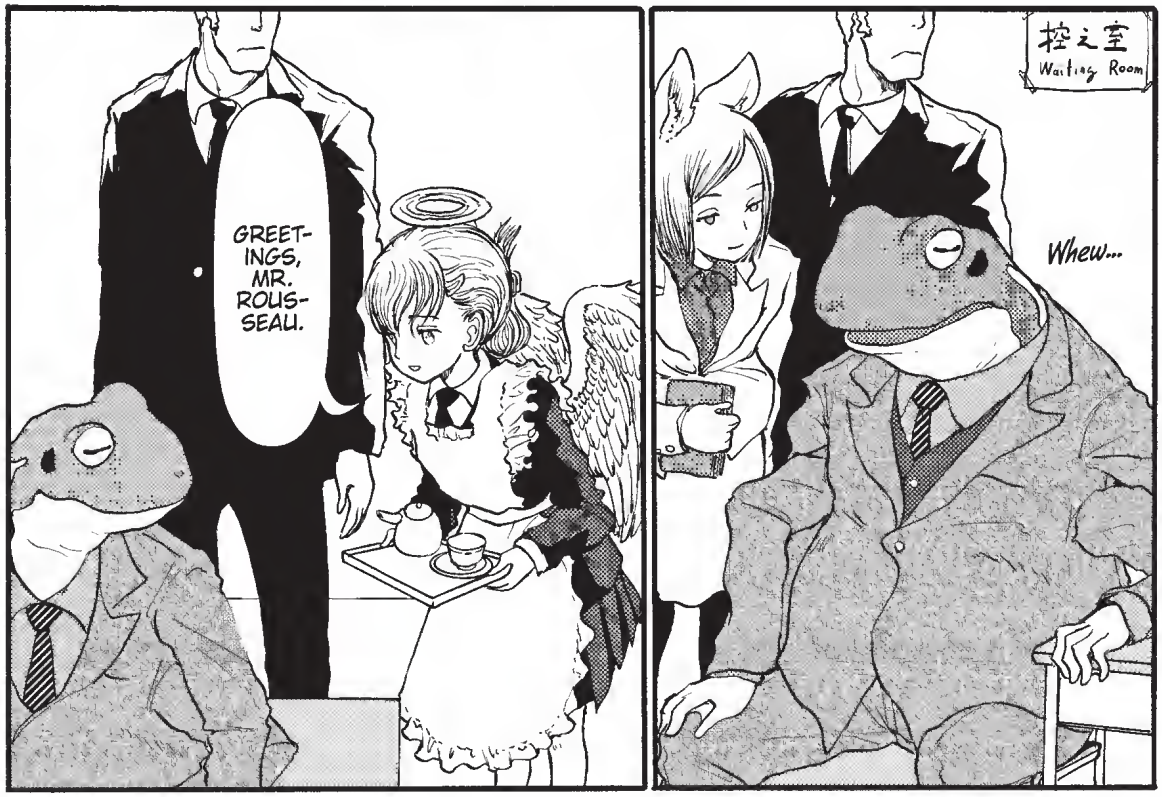

THAT, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS BATTLE DRESS.
MINE IS A SUIT... CLOTHING INTENDED TO SHOW RESPECT TO OTHERS.
I'D LIKE TO CONFIRM TWO THINGS.
FIRST: TO WHOM ARE YOU REFERRING AS THE "ENEMY"? AND SECOND: WHO IS PROVIDING YOU WITH ARMS?
OF COURSE IT IS. OUR TRIBE IS FOREVER AT WAR WITH THE ENEMY.
FEAR NOT. WE FIGHT ONLY AGAINST THOSE WHO HAVE SENSELESSLY ATTACKED OUR BRETHREN.

I'LL BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE ACTING IN SELF-DEFENSE.
UNLIKE THE APES' SO-CALLED "GOD," WHO CAN NEITHER BE SEEN NOR HIS INFLUENCE FELT.
AND IT IS SIMPLY OUR GOD LENDING US TRUE STRENGTH.
OTHERWISE IT IS WE WHO WILL BE WIPED OUT.
BUT I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER: WE MUST COEXIST PEACEFULLY WITH THE ONES YOU CALL "APES."
THUS, THEY LIVE TO SERVE THEIR OWN INTERESTS, NOT TO GRANT OUR WISHES.
THAT, AND THAT OUR "GODS" ARE BEINGS THAT EXIST IN ACTUALITY, JUST LIKE THE APES AND WE OURSELVES.

BUT FACTS ARE FACTS.
I, OF COURSE, PAY MY RESPECTS TO THE GODS.
UNCOUTH SWINE!
...BUT OUR GODS AND THEIR SERVANTS ARE *FAR MIGHTIER* STILL. I'VE SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES.
LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY. LIVING AMONGST THE APES ALL THIS TIME HAS **BLINDED** YOU.
THEY MAY BE MANY IN NUMBER AND THEY MAY HAVE GUNS AND PLANES AND ALL MANNER OF OTHER TRINKETS...
.....
FWUMP


NOT THAT AN APE IMPOSTER LIKE YOU WOULD UNDER-STAND OUR CAUSE.
WE MUST **RECLAIM** THE BEAUTIFUL WATER AND EARTH OF OUR ANCESTORS FROM THE APES' HIDEOUS HIVE, EVEN IF IT COSTS US OUR LIVES!
NO, I SAY THAT EVEN **WITHOUT** THE AID OF THE GODS, WE SHALL NOT YIELD!
TO STAKE ONE'S LIFE ON A CONCEPTUAL IDEAL...
*THEY SEEK THE GLORY OF **THE PAST**-- A PAST THAT MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE EVER BEEN.*
*IT'S THE SAME THINKING AS THE MAMMALS THEMSELVES, AND IT IS LIKE **POISON** TO US...*


CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP


GREET-
INGS,
MR.
ROUS-
SEAU.
控え室
Waiting Room
Whew...

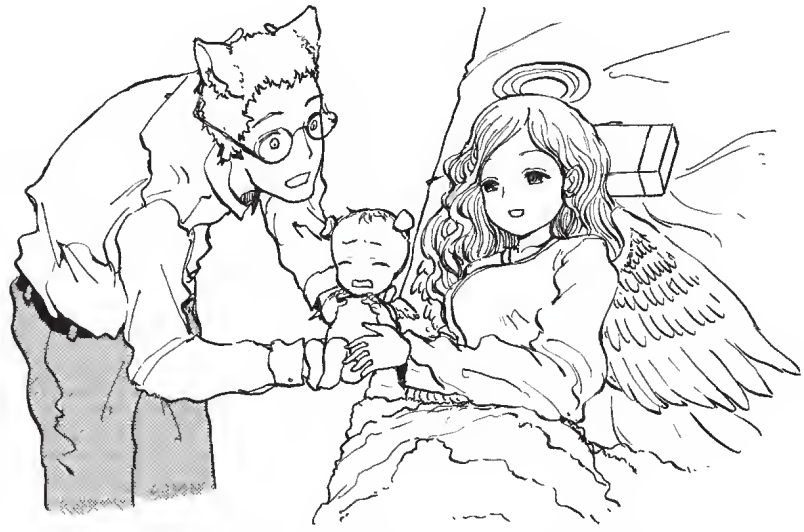
WE'VE PREPARED SOME FRENCH TEA FOR YOU.
WHAT HAVE WE HERE?
F-TUNE
PLEASE ENJOY.
Hot...!
MERCI.

A CentaUr's Life

GENETICS MADE EASY: LESSON 4
MIXED RACES

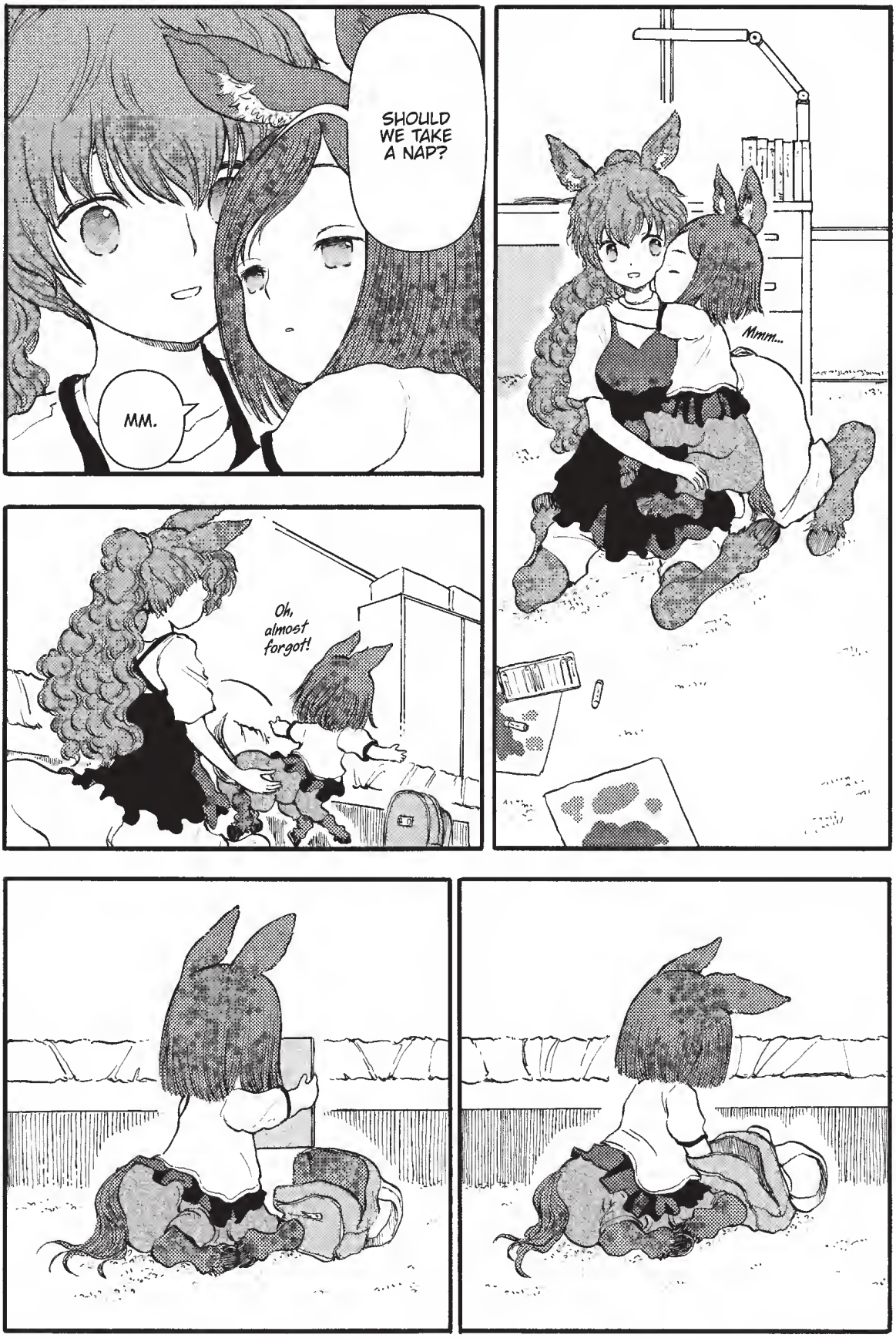
IN RARE CASES (WHICH STILL AMOUNTS TO ABOUT ONE IN TWENTY INDIVIDUALS), A PERSON WILL INHERIT THE RACIAL TRAITS OF *BOTH* PARENTS, PRODUCING A HYBRID. WHAT'S TO EXPLAIN THIS PHENOMENON? WELL, THE POSSIBILITIES ARE A) THAT FOR SOME REASON, THE OFFSPRING'S RACE-DETERMINING GENES HAVE TURNED INTO SOMETHING THAT CANNOT FUNCTION CORRECTLY, OR B) THAT THERE'S NO PROBLEM WITH THE OFFSPRING'S GENES THEMSELVES, BUT THAT FOR SOME REASON THE REGULATION PROCESS CARRIED OUT BY THE RACE-DETERMINING GENES IS DEFECTIVE OR INCOMPLETE.

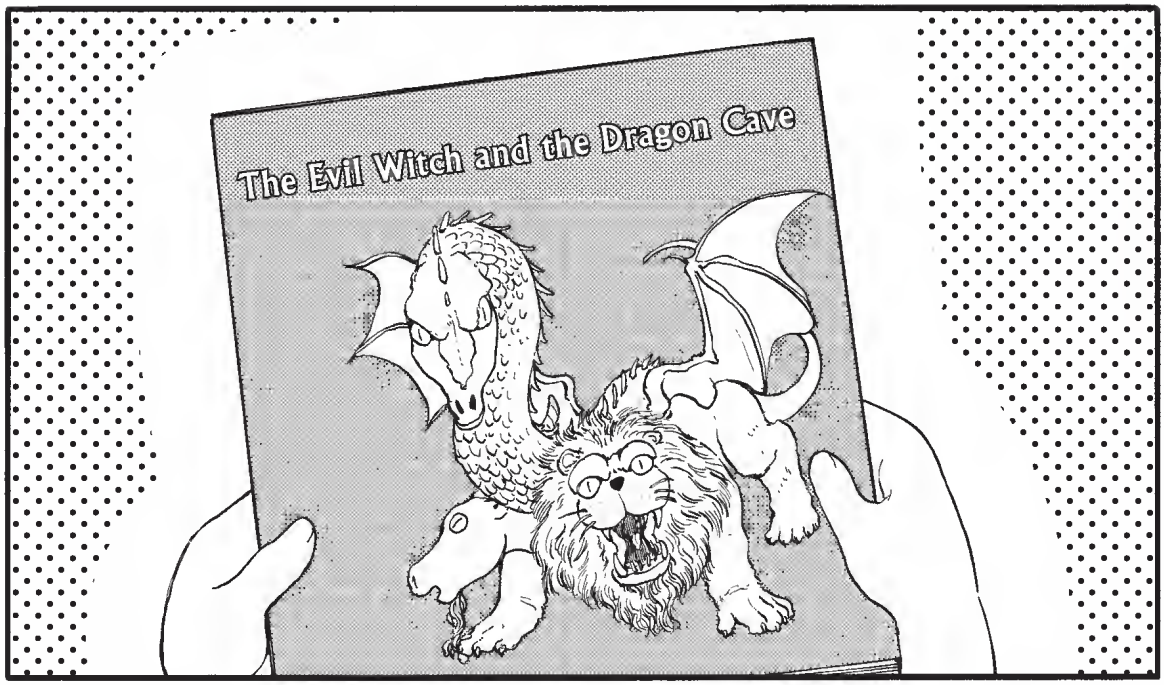
GENES ON THEIR OWN ARE NOTHING MORE THAN SIMPLE CODES; IN ORDER FOR THEM TO BE ACTIVATED, THE DNA MUST BE TRANSCRIBED INTO RNA (USED IN THE TEMPORARY COPYING OF GENETIC INFORMATION), WHICH THEN GENERATES PROTEIN, WHICH MUST THEN PERFORM ITS OWN FUNCTION. IF ANY PROBLEM OCCURS ALONG THAT PATH, EVEN GOOD GENES WON'T FUNCTION PROPERLY. ONE WELL-KNOWN CASE IS THAT OF TERATOGENESIS (LIMB DEFORMATION) CAUSED BY THALIDOMIDE, A DRUG WHICH WAS USED AS A SLEEPING AID. IN THIS CASE, THE DRUG WAS NOT AFFECTING THE GENES, BUT WAS DEACTIVATING THE PROTEINS RESPONSIBLE FOR LIMB GROWTH. OF COURSE THE ABNORMALITY IN THIS CASE WAS CAUSED BY USE OF MEDICATION, BUT NO TWO ORGANISMS ARE BORN EXACTLY ALIKE, BE THEY THE SAME RACE OR EVEN SIBLINGS, SO THE UNEXPECTED CAN OCCUR EVEN IN A CREATURE BORN IN AN ENVIRONMENT WITHOUT THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR OTHER FOREIGN SUBSTANCES. THESE ARE EXCEPTIONAL CASES, TO BE SURE, BUT THE OCCURRENCE OF A HYBRID IS A RELATIVELY COMMON ONE AMONG THEM.



IT IS FAIRLY COMMON FOR A HYBRID TO INHERIT THE RACIAL TRAITS OF BOTH PARENTS, BUT IN RARER CASES, THE RACIAL TRAITS OF A GRANDPARENT OR EVEN MORE DISTANT ANCESTOR WILL EMERGE.

YAWN~~!
GETTIN' SLEEPY, SHINO-CHAN?
NUZZLE
NUZZLE
Mrffmrff...

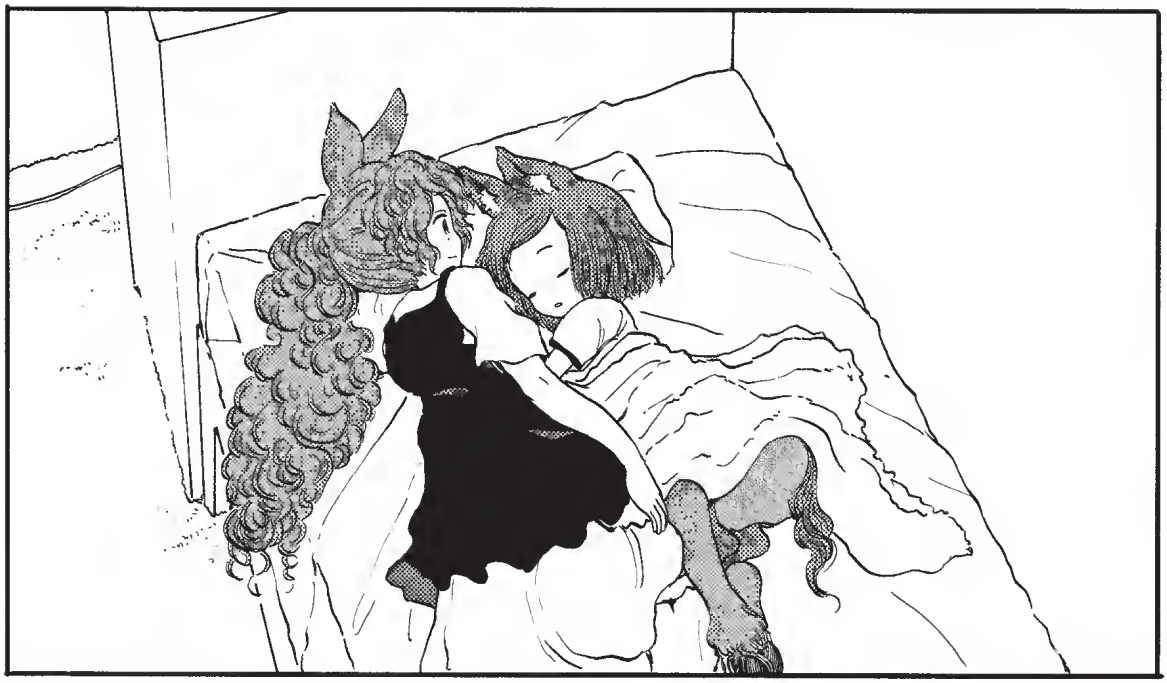

SHOULD WE TAKE A NAP?
MM.
Mmm...
Oh, almost forgot!



CHAPTER 34

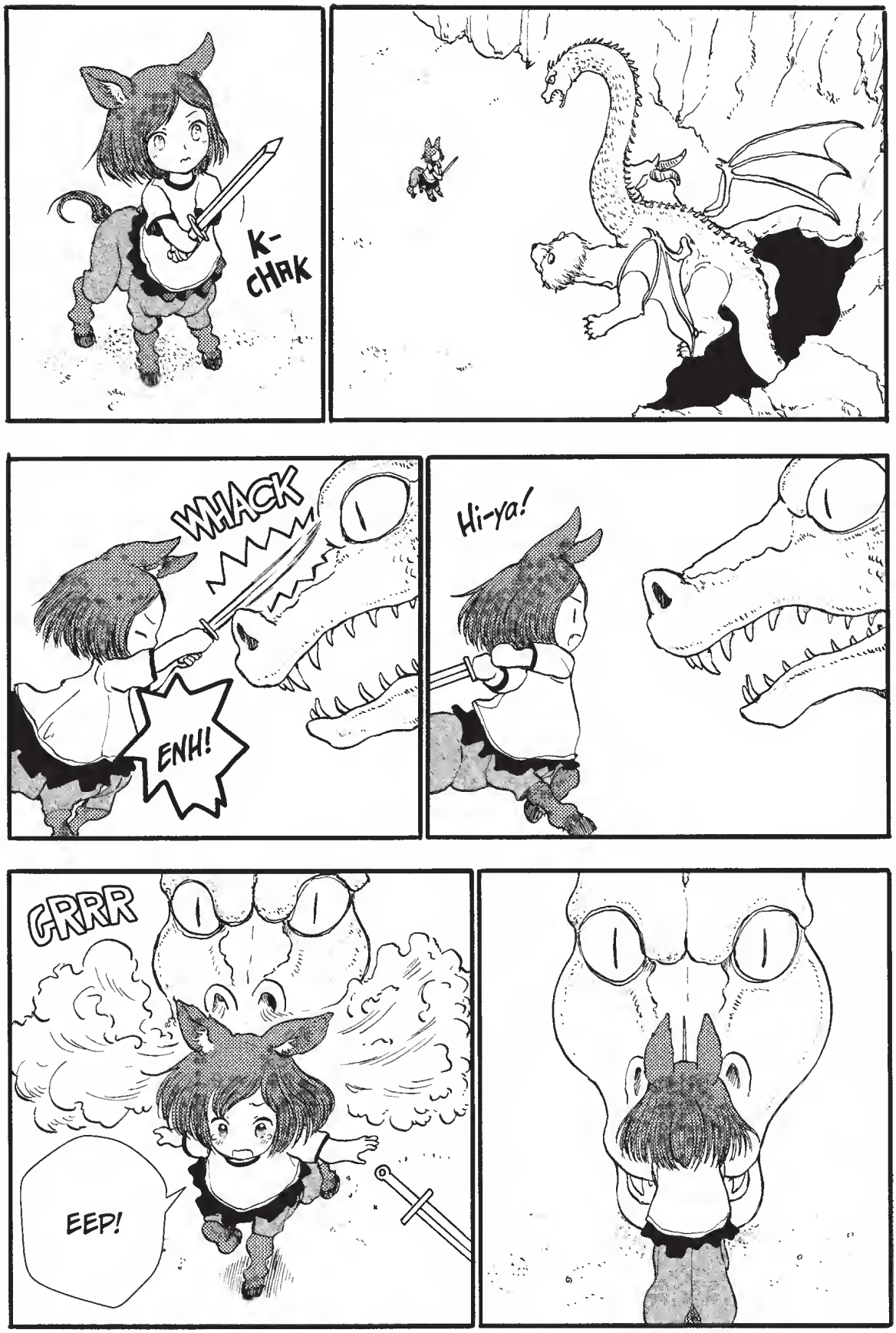
I'M GONNA KEEP IT UNDER MY PILLOW.
SHAKE SHAKE
YOU WANNA READ IT?
BUT THIS BOOK HAS SCARY MONSTERS AND STUFF IN IT.
THAT WAY I CAN DREAM ABOUT ADVENTURES!
Ah! Why you little...
Mommy, you're so bad at this!
CLICK CLICK
I BEAT UP MONSTERS EVERY DAY!
NO PROBLEM.

AND YOU'RE GONNA NAP WITH ME.
VERY WELL. SHALL WE GET TO SLEEP, THEN?



BIG SISTER?
PLINK
ROLL
ROLL
Big sister's not here...
WHUD

WHO
OSH


K-
CHAK
WHACK
ENH!
Hi-ya!
GRRR
EEP!

FWOOSH
FWOOSH
VWOOSH

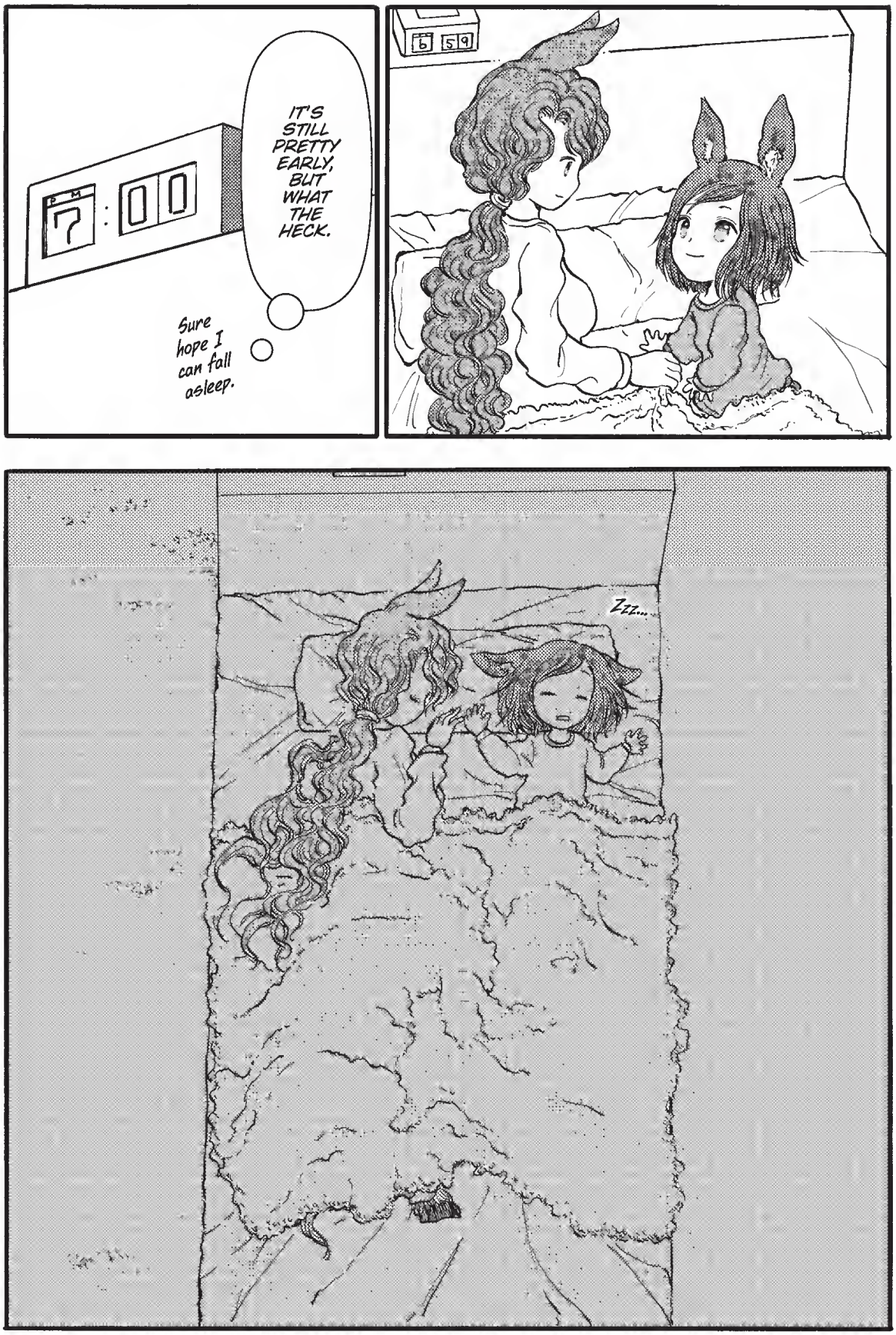
GRAH
NOO!

-ster...
--sis-ter...
GRAHHHH
HIMEEE!
SHINO-CHAN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
HAH!

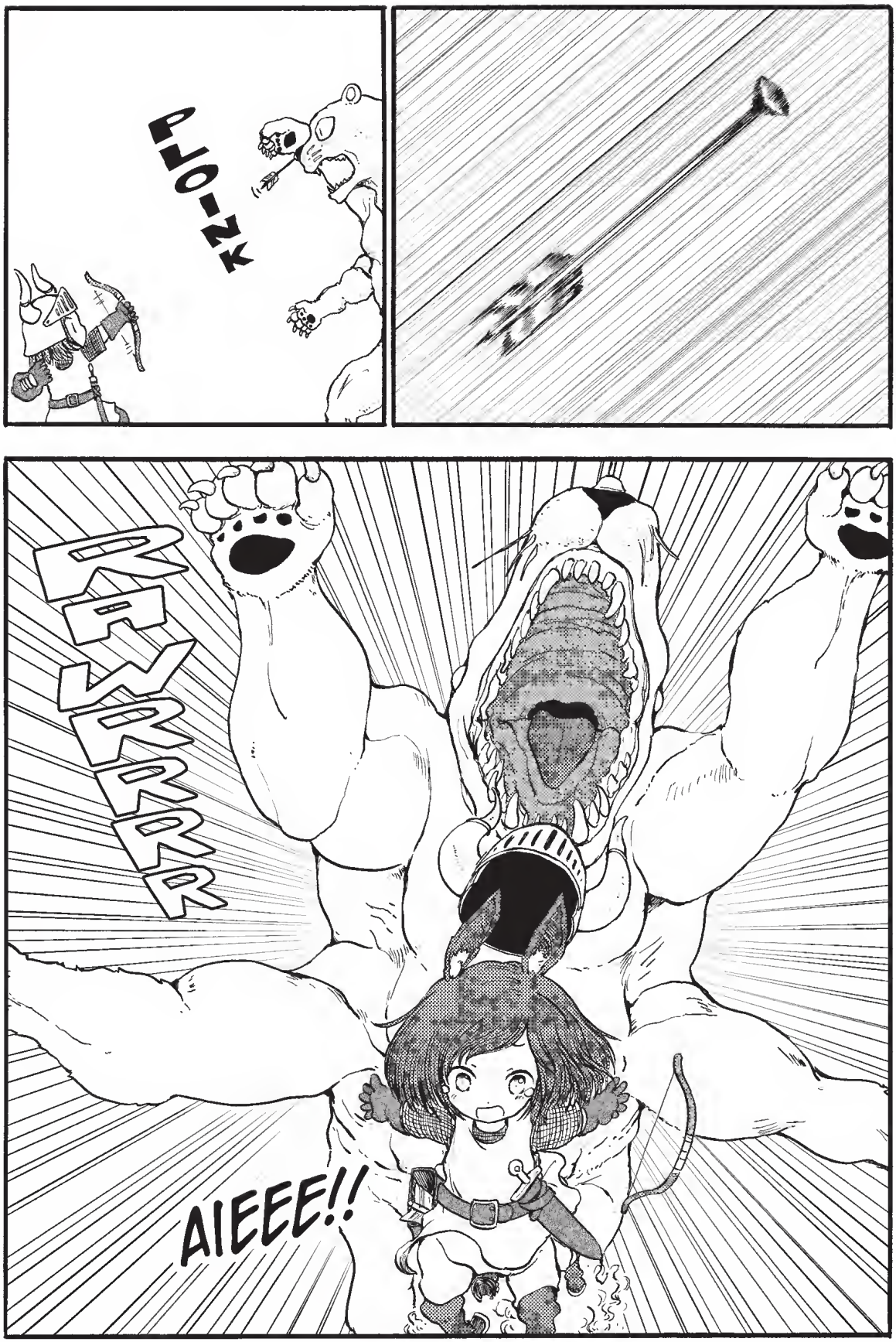
YOU WERE HAVING A BAD DREAM, HUH?
QUIVER QUIVER
3:04
WELL, UH...
WHIMPER
ER.
BIG SIS HIME-CHAN, WHY DIDN'T YOU COME SAVE ME?
BIG SIS HAS SOME THINGS SHE HAS TO DO, SHINO.
BIG SIS, YOU DIDN'T GO TO SLEEP WITH ME?

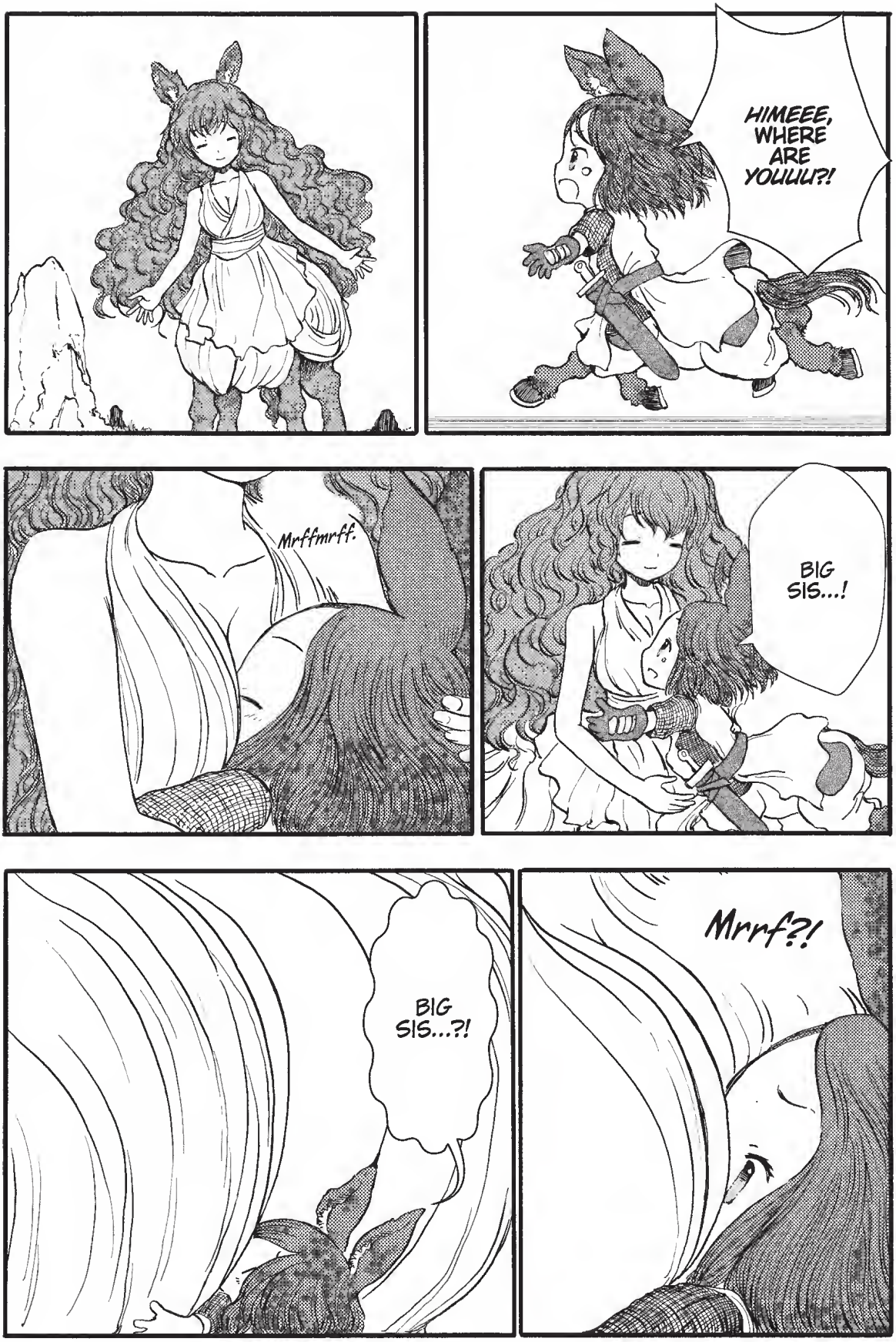
I'M SORRY, SHINO-CHAN.
WAAAHHH!!
Wow, it's not often Hime-chan makes Shino cry.
WAAHH!
HEY, HEY, SHINO-CHAN, I KNOW! YOU WANNA SLEEP OVER?
SLEEP OVER?
As long as Auntie says it's okay.
Sniff...

I'll come get you in the morning.
You do as she says now, k?
Yep.
Way to go, short-stack.


PM
7:00
IT'S STILL PRETTY EARLY, BUT WHAT THE HECK.
Sure hope I can fall asleep.
6:59
Zzz...

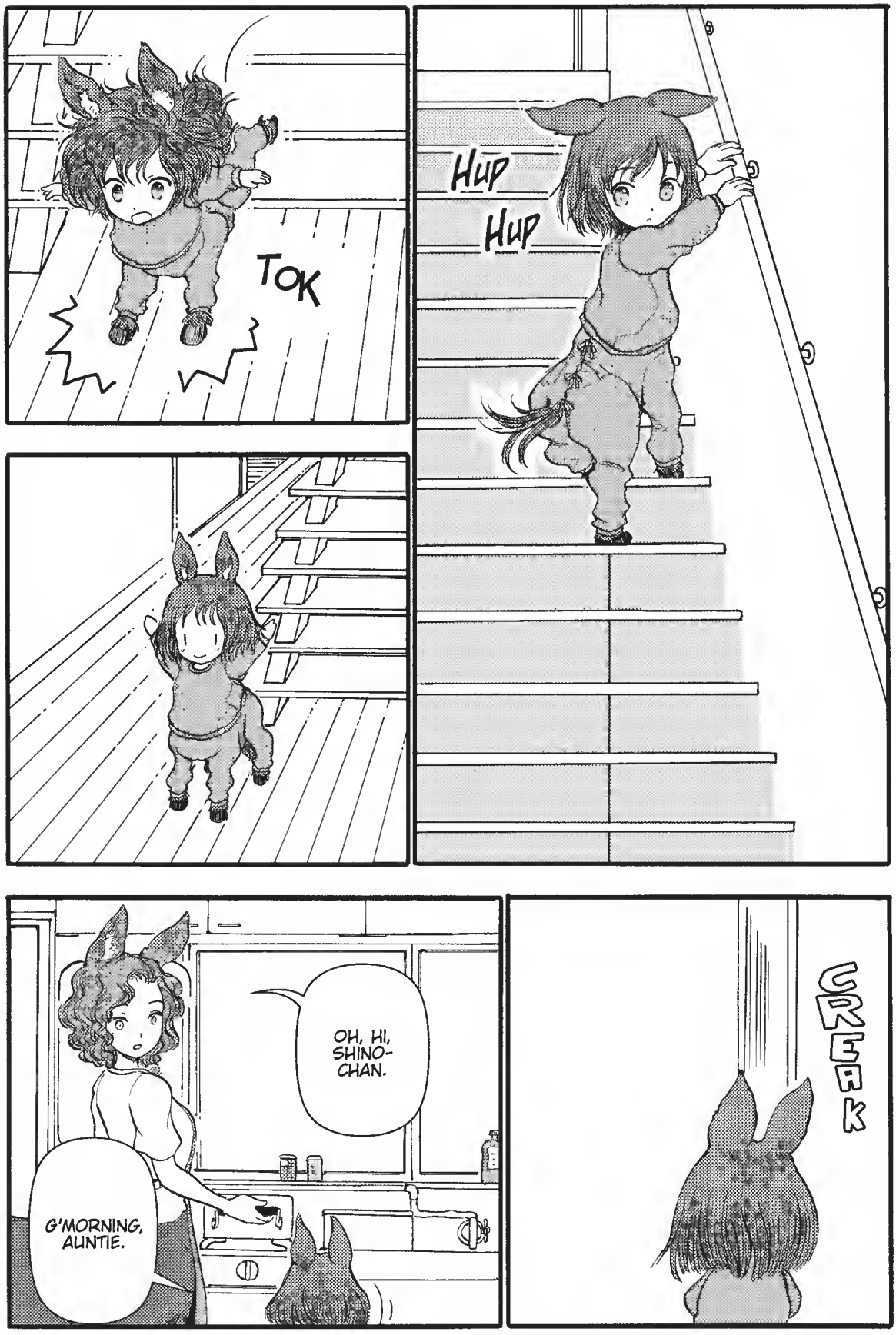
Armor...
Big Sister!
Hime, where are you?
SWIP
RAWR!

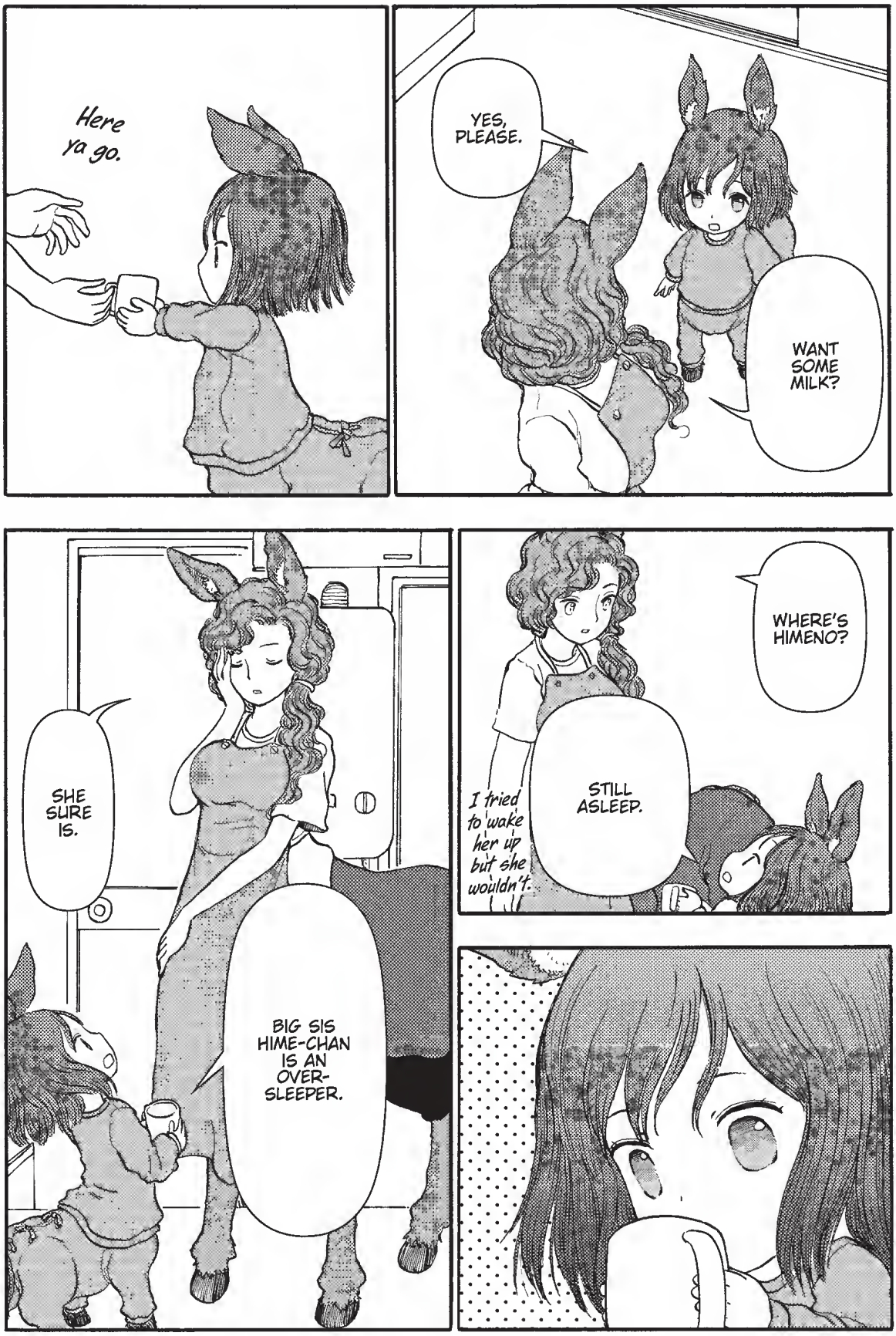

PJO-ZK
RRWRRRR
AIEEE!!


HIMEEE, WHERE ARE YOUUU?!
Mrffmrff.
BIG SIS...!
BIG SIS...?!
Mrrf?!

POOF

CHEEP CHEEP
Mrrf
Moof
FIDGET
Mrrn...
SQUIRM
SNOOOZE
BIG SIS, WAKEY WAKEY!
RUFFLE RUFFLE
Zzz...
TOK

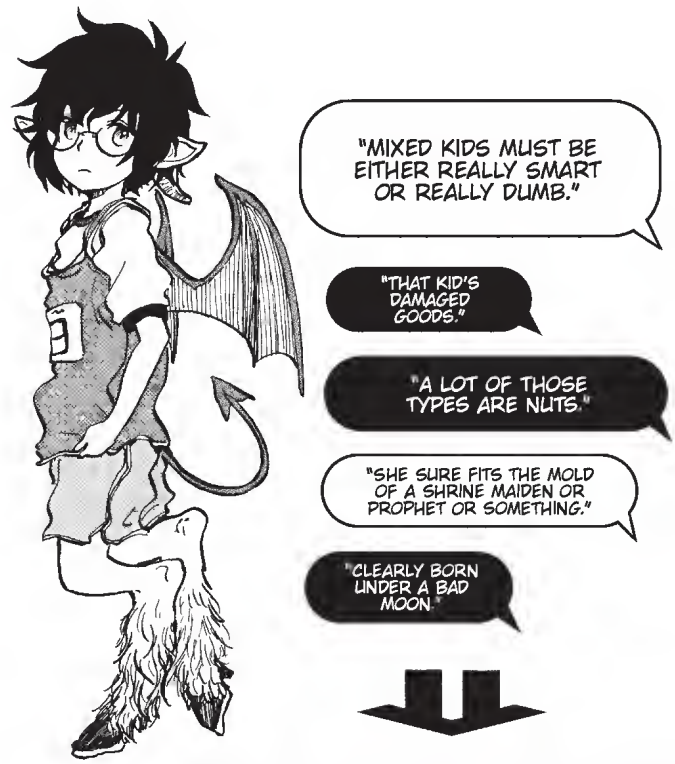

TOK
HUP
HUP
CREAK
OH, HI, SHINO-CHAN.
G'MORNING, AUNTIE.


Here ya go.
YES, PLEASE.
WANT SOME MILK?
WHERE'S HIMENO?
STILL ASLEEP.
I tried to wake her up but she wouldn't.
SHE SURE IS.
BIG SIS HIME-CHAN IS AN OVER-SLEEPER.

A CentaUr's Life

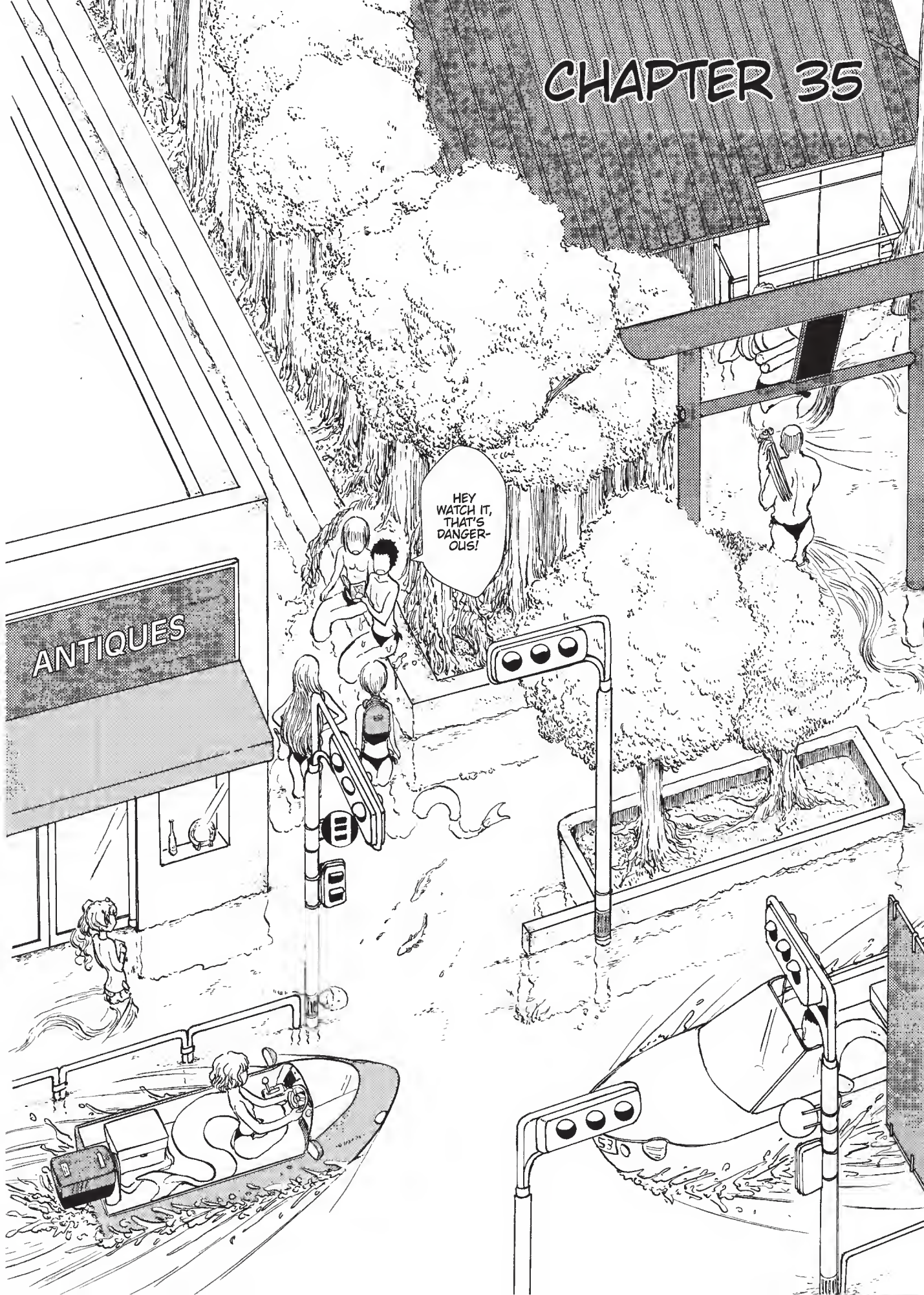
GENETICS MADE EASY: LESSON 5
NO PERFECT GENES, NO PERFECT PEOPLE

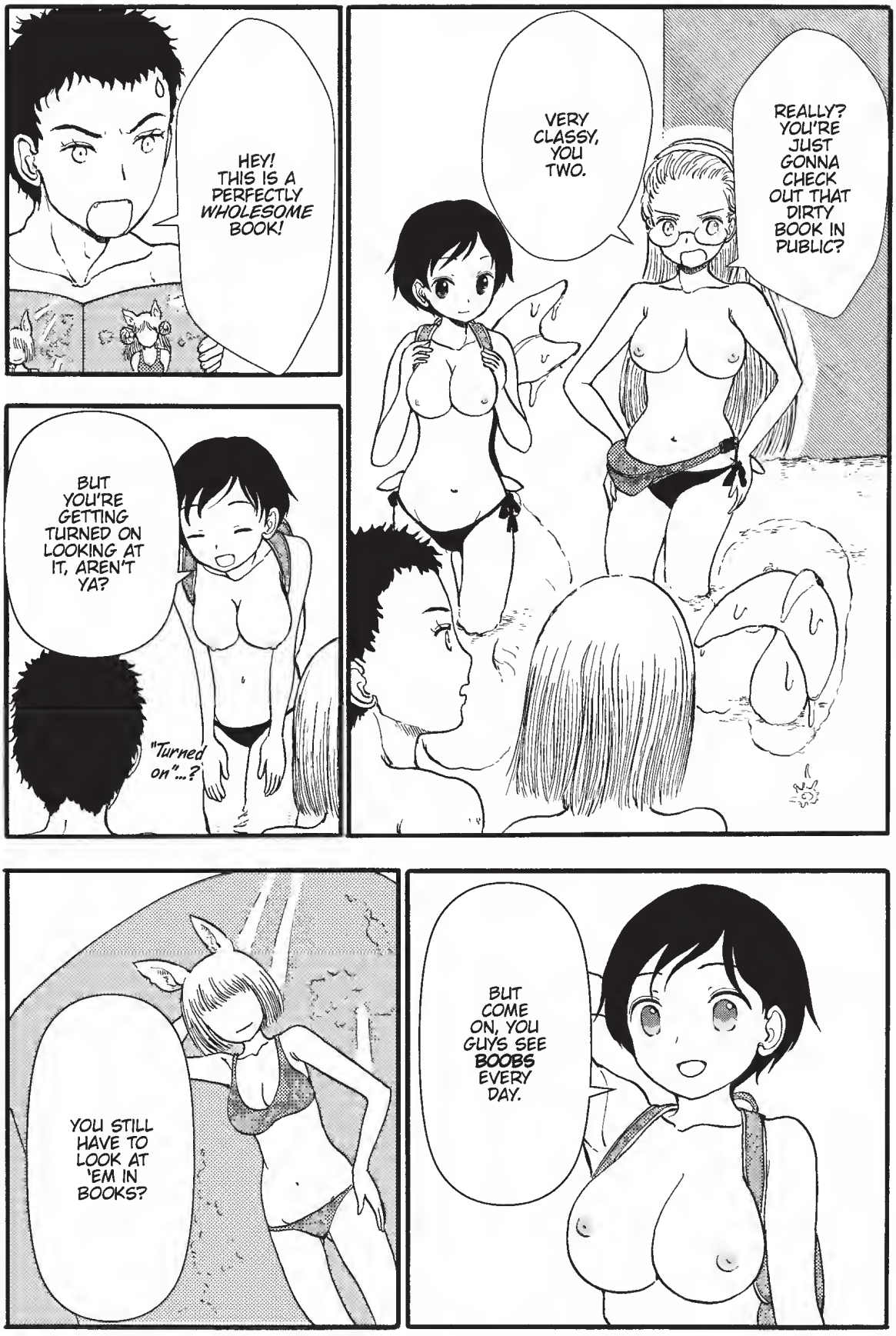
IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMAIN WARY OF THE ATTITUDES ONCE HELD IN CERTAIN REGIONS THAT WOULD ELEVATE HYBRIDS AS "SPECIAL," OR CONVERSELY THOSE THAT WOULD LOOK DOWN UPON THEM AS "INCOMPLETE." IN REALITY, THERE ISN'T A SINGLE PERSON WHOSE GENES ARE COMPLETELY "NORMAL." BY AND LARGE, EVEN THOSE WHO LOOK COMPLETELY NORMAL AT A GLANCE HAVE SOME KIND OF UNSEEN ERROR IN THEIR GENES THAT HAS NO IMPACT ON THEIR ABILITY TO LEAD A HEALTHY AND NORMAL LIFE. IN THE CASE OF HYBRIDS, THE ERROR SIMPLY HAPPENS TO MANIFEST IN A WAY THAT IS VISIBLE TO THE EYE. IF YOU SHOULD WITNESS THE USE OF DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE TOWARD PEOPLE OF MIXED RACE, BE SURE TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL POLICE OFFICER, THE INTERNAL BUREAU OF SOCIAL PRESERVATION, OR THE IDEOLOGICAL SECURITY BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. PROMPT CORRECTIVE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN.

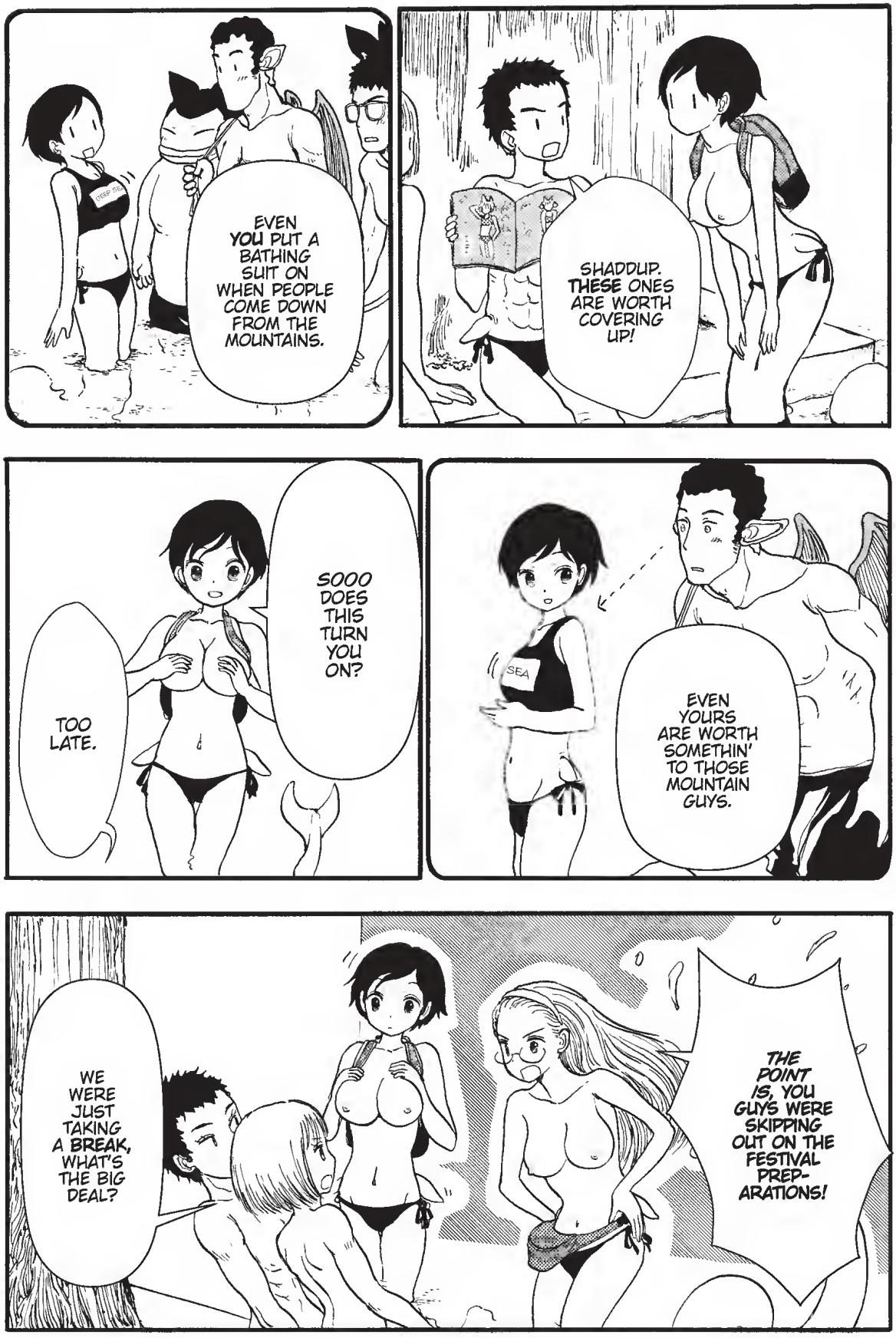

"MIXED KIDS MUST BE EITHER REALLY SMART OR REALLY DUMB."
"THAT KID'S DAMAGED GOODS."
"A LOT OF THOSE TYPES ARE NUTS."
"SHE SURE FITS THE MOLD OF A SHRINE MAIDEN OR PROPHET OR SOMETHING."
"CLEARLY BORN UNDER A BAD MOON."

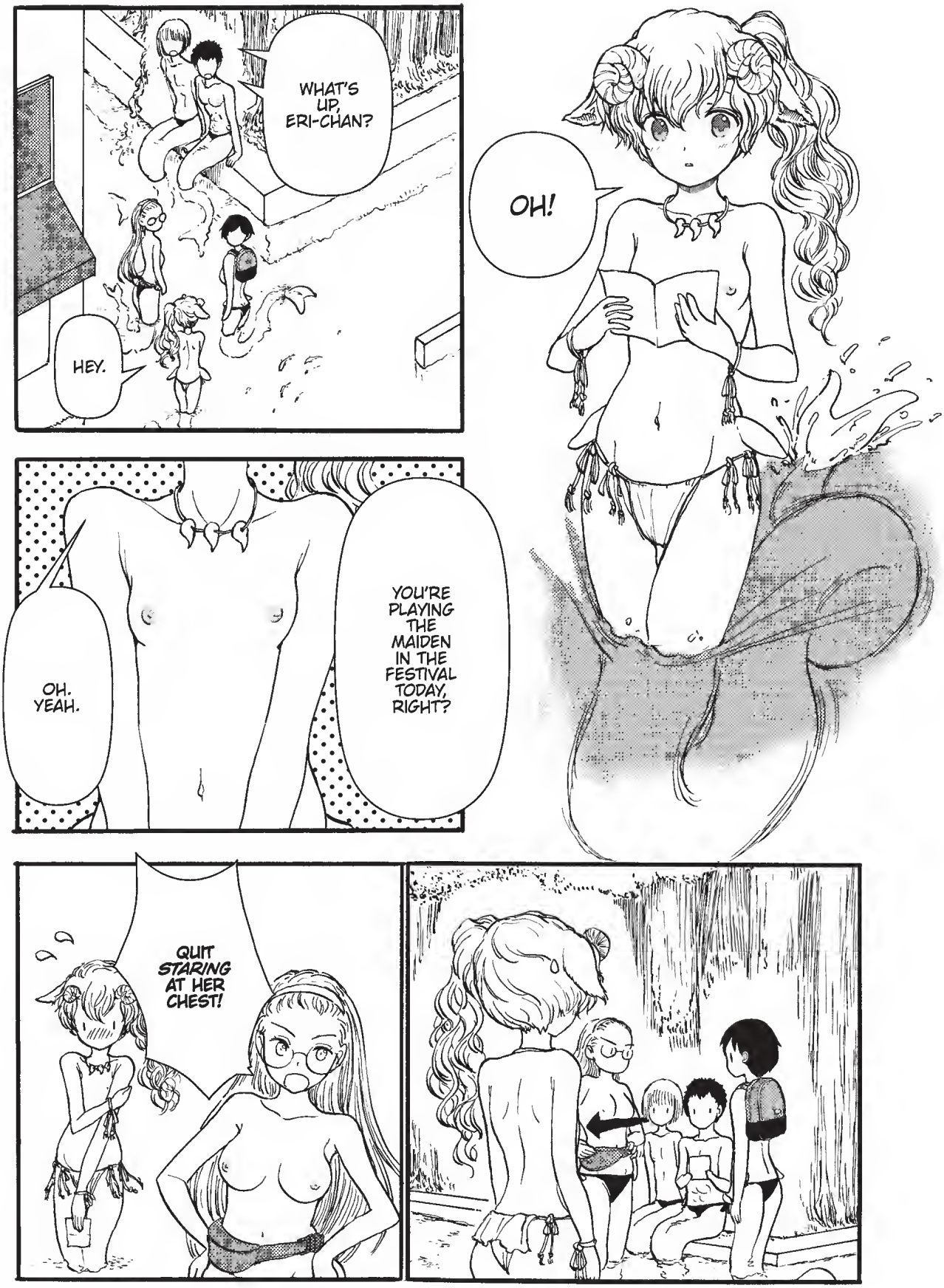
ALL ARE NOTHING BUT GROUNDLESS SUPERSTITIONS! BE IT VERBALLY, ON PAPER, OR OVER THE WEB, MAKING SUCH ASSERTIONS TOWARDS ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL IS A SERIOUS CRIME THAT WILL INCUR PUNISHMENT UP TO AND INCLUDING THE DEATH PENALTY!

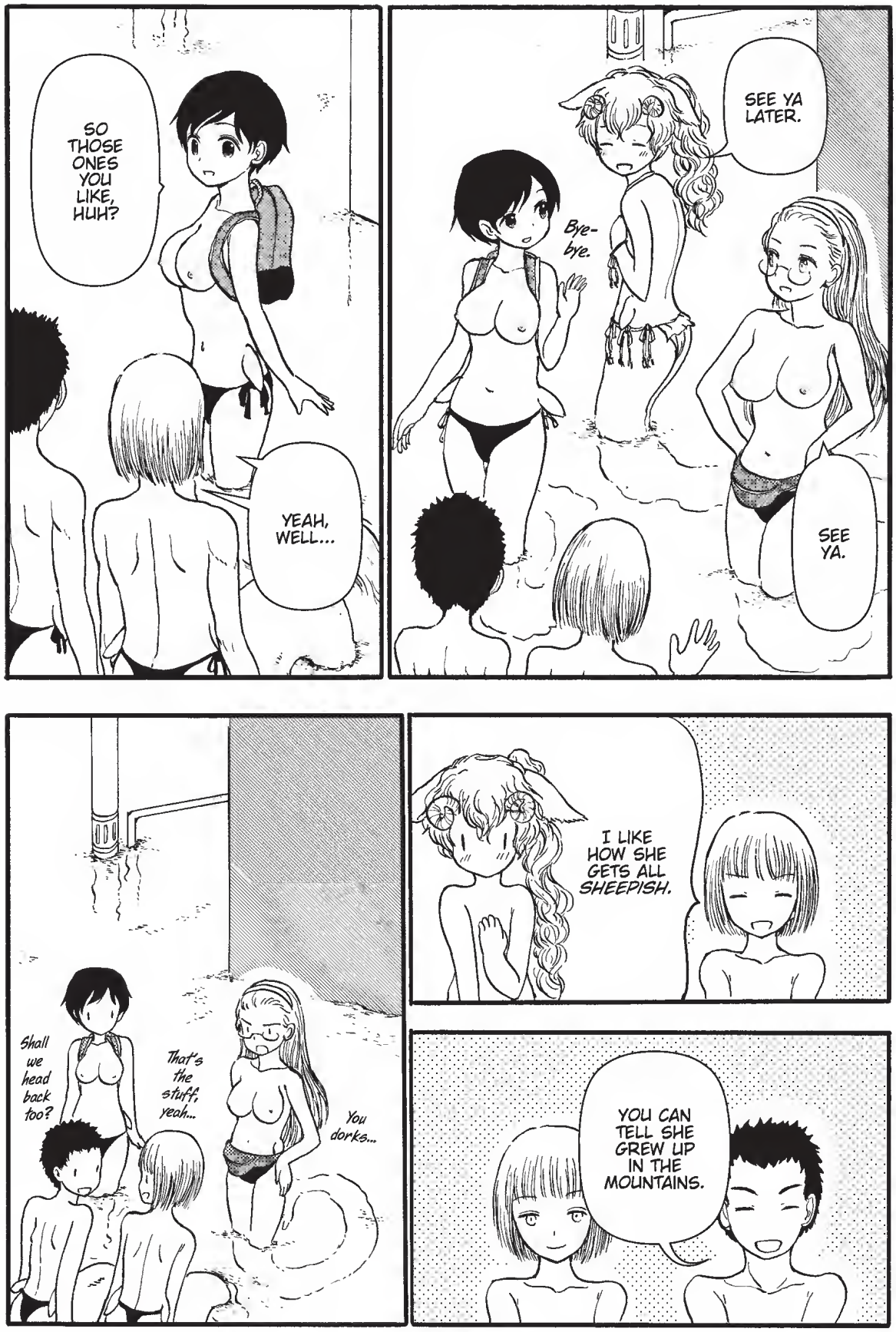
SPLASH
GAH!
MY COUSIN'S A COMPETITIVE SWIMMER UP IN THE MOUNTAINS.
WOW! HOW'D YOU GET YOUR HANDS ON A BOOK LIKE THIS?

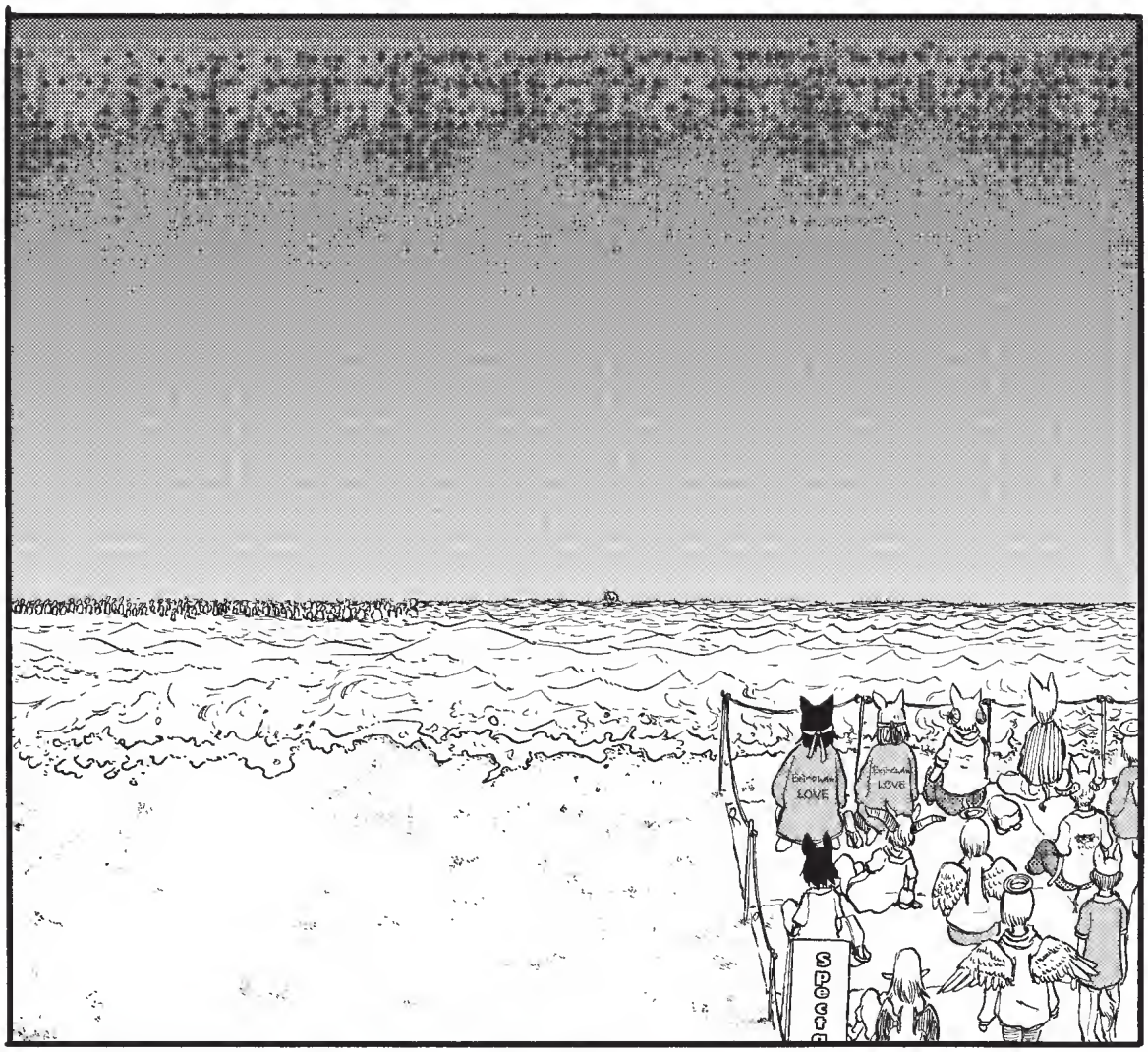

CHAPTER 35
HEY WATCH IT, THAT'S DANGER-OUS!
ANTIQUES

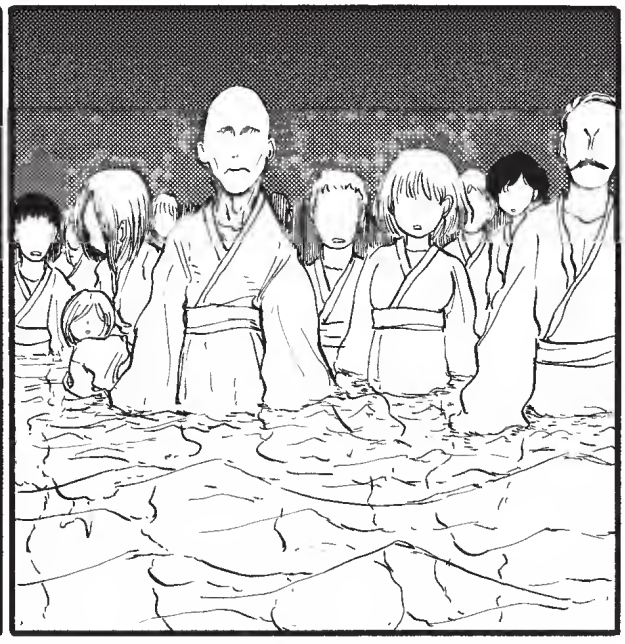

HEY! THIS IS A PERFECTLY WHOLESOME BOOK!
REALLY? YOU'RE JUST GONNA CHECK OUT THAT DIRTY BOOK IN PUBLIC?
VERY CLASSY, YOU TWO.
BUT YOU'RE GETTING TURNED ON LOOKING AT IT, AREN'T YA?
"Turned on"...?
BUT COME ON, YOU GUYS SEE BOOBS EVERY DAY.
YOU STILL HAVE TO LOOK AT 'EM IN BOOKS?

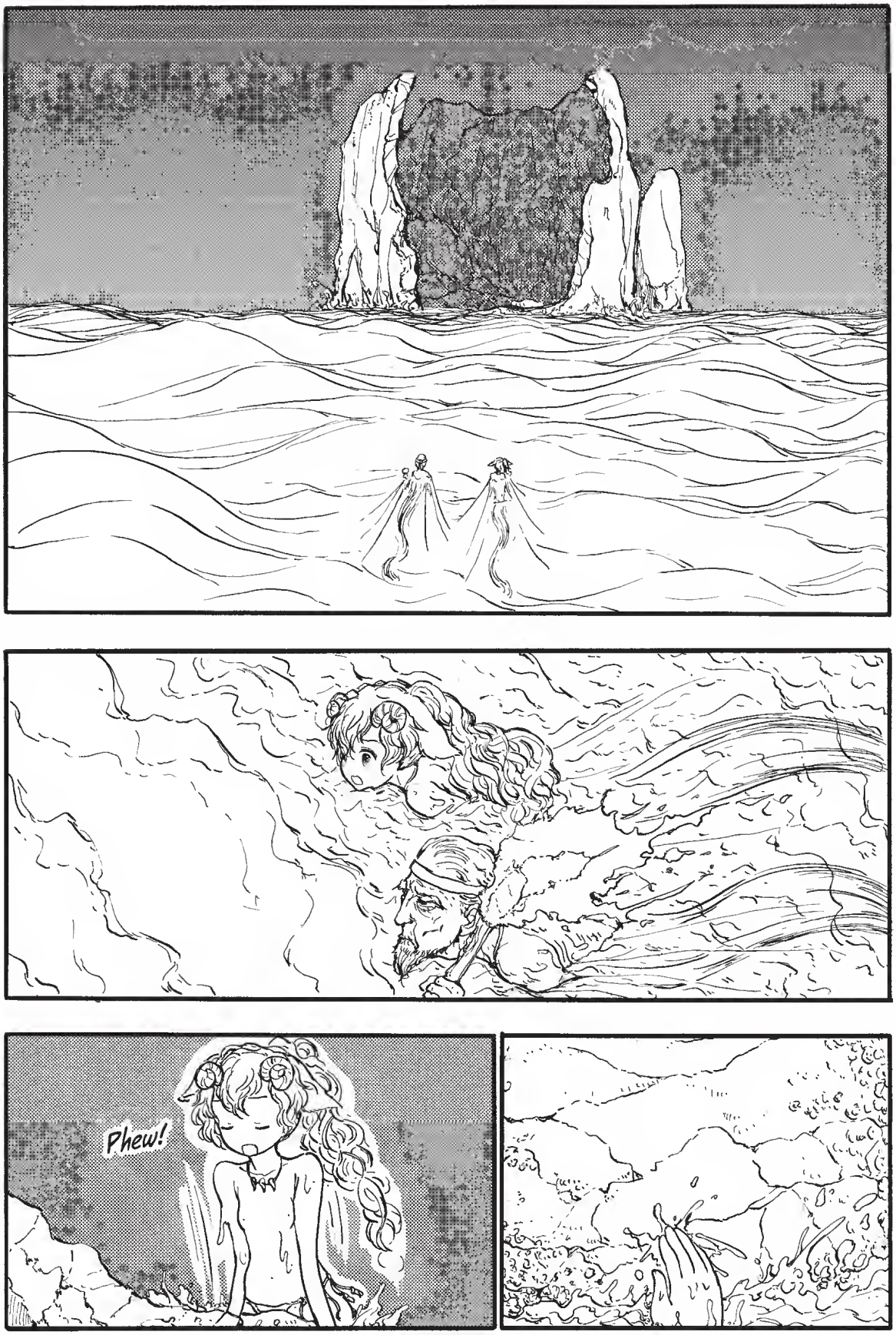

EVEN YOU PUT A BATHING SUIT ON WHEN PEOPLE COME DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAINS.
SHADDUP. THESE ONES ARE WORTH COVERING UP!
SOOO DOES THIS TURN YOU ON?
TOO LATE.
SEA
EVEN YOURS ARE WORTH SOMETHIN' TO THOSE MOUNTAIN GUYS.
WE WERE JUST TAKING A BREAK, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?
THE POINT IS, YOU GUYS WERE SKIPPING OUT ON THE FESTIVAL PREP-ARATIONS!

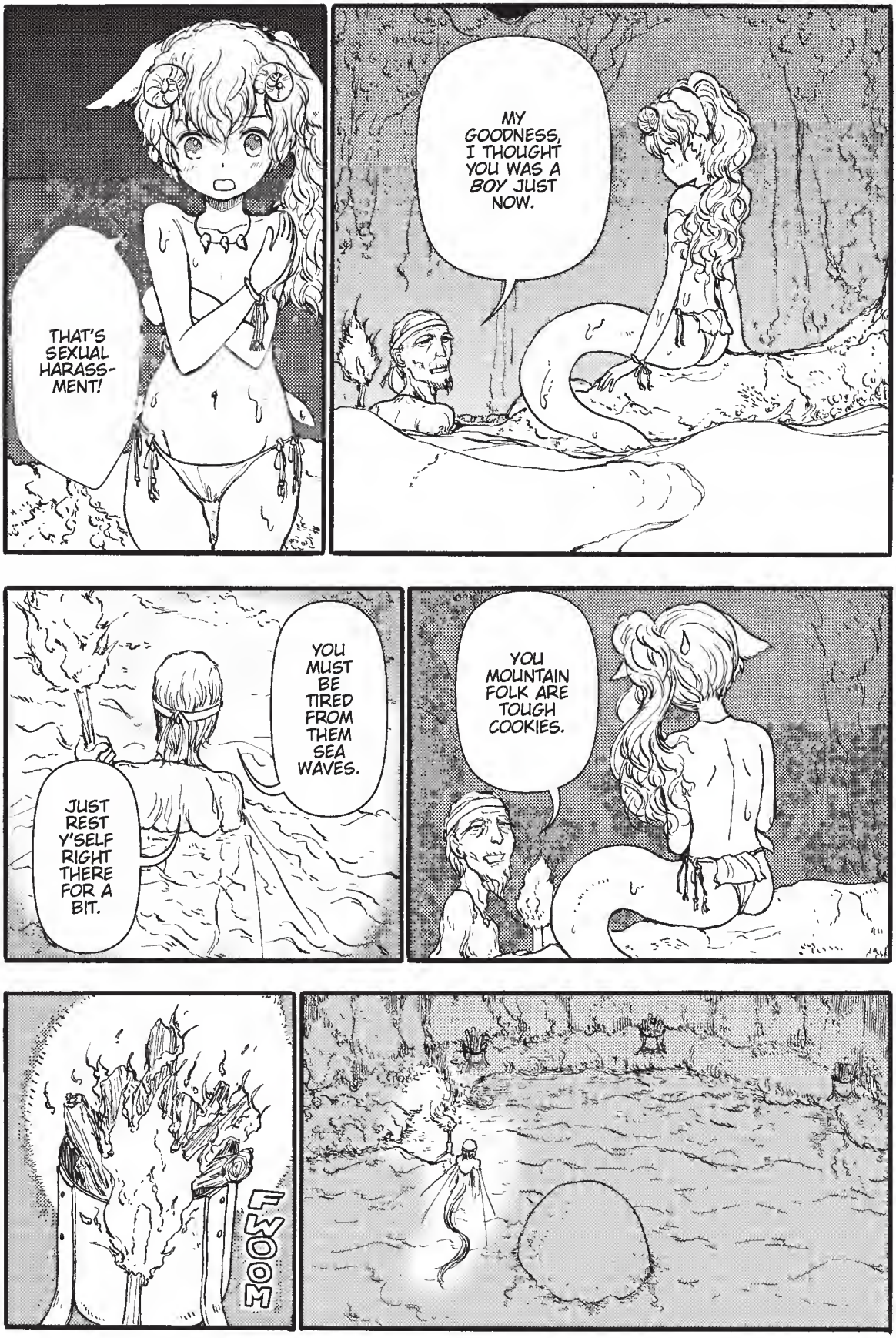

WHAT'S UP, ERI-CHAN?
HEY.
OH!
YOU'RE PLAYING THE MAIDEN IN THE FESTIVAL TODAY, RIGHT?
OH. YEAH.
QUIT STARING AT HER CHEST!

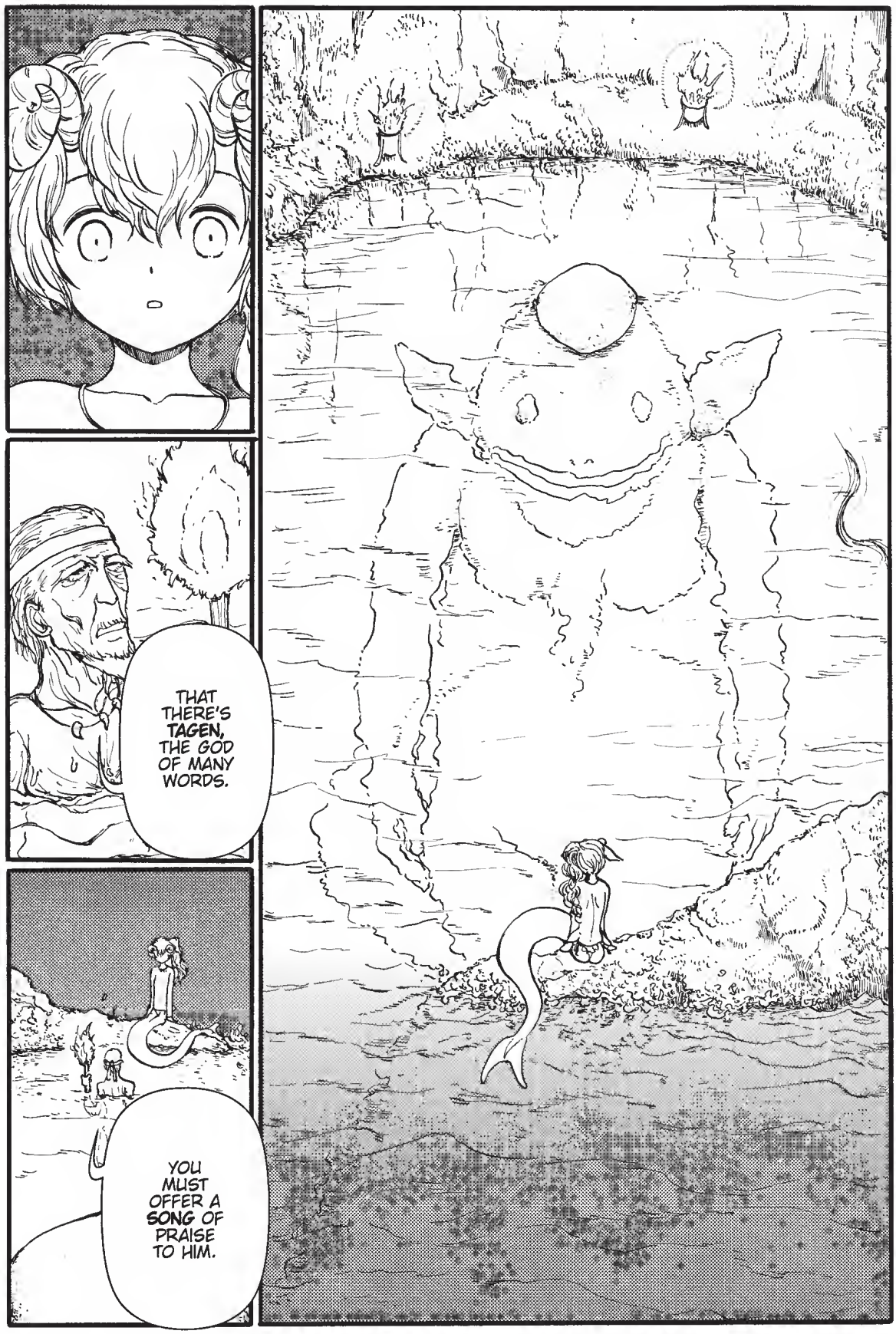

SO THOSE ONES YOU LIKE, HUH?
YEAH, WELL...
SEE YA LATER.
Bye-bye.
SEE YA.
I LIKE HOW SHE GETS ALL SHEEPISH.
YOU CAN TELL SHE GREW UP IN THE MOUNTAINS.
Shall we head back too?
That's the stuff, yeah...
You dorks...

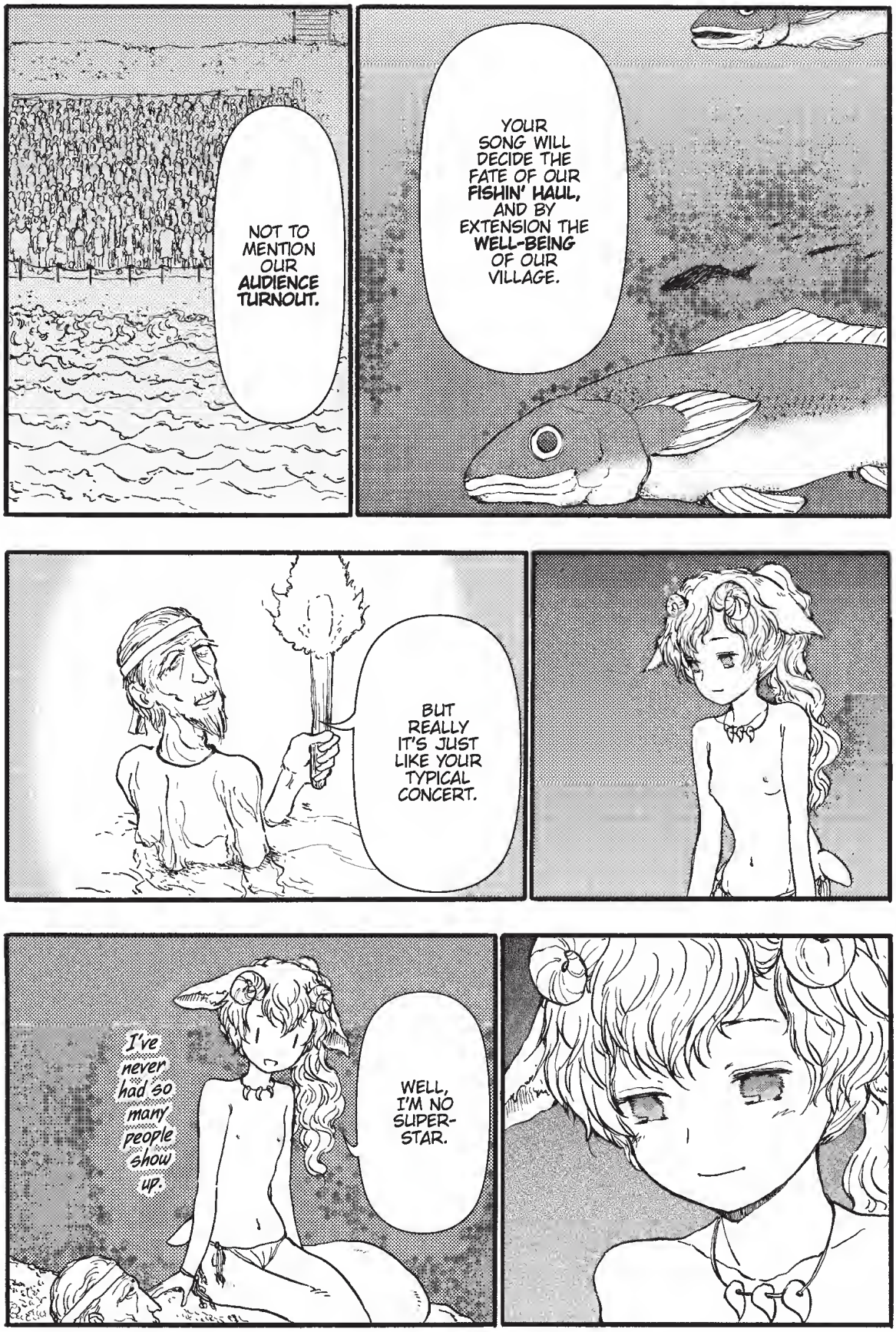

LOVE
LOVE

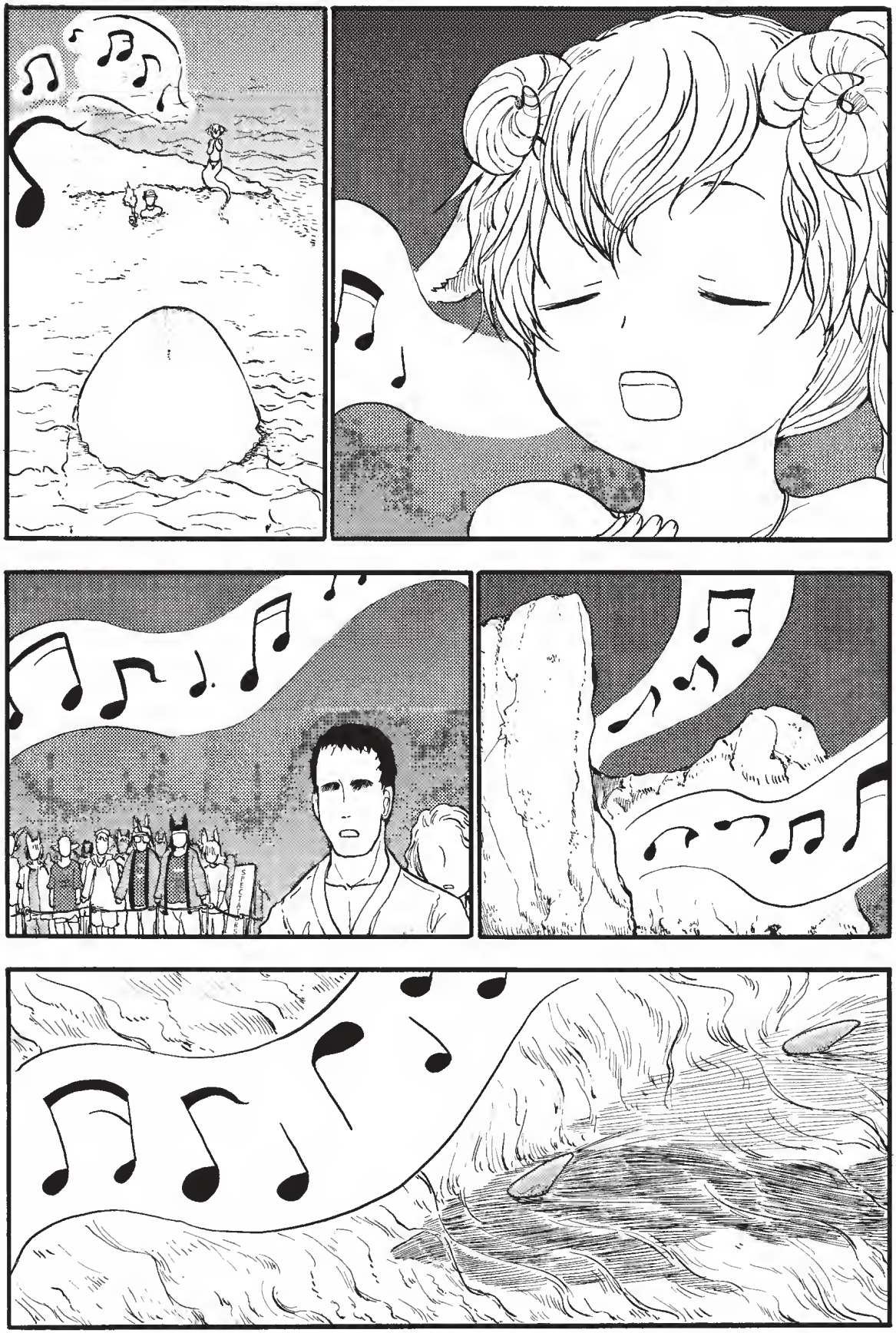


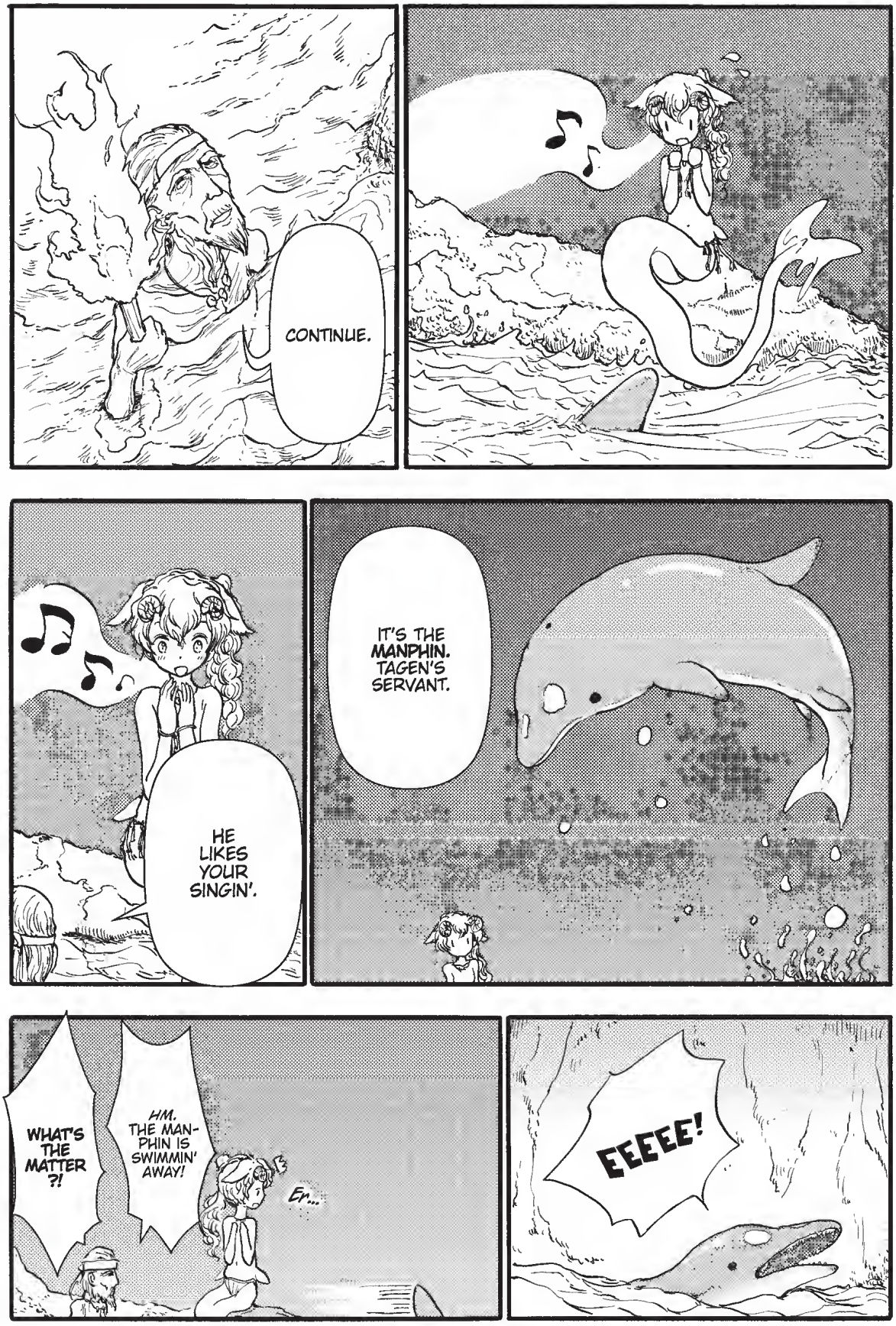

Phew!

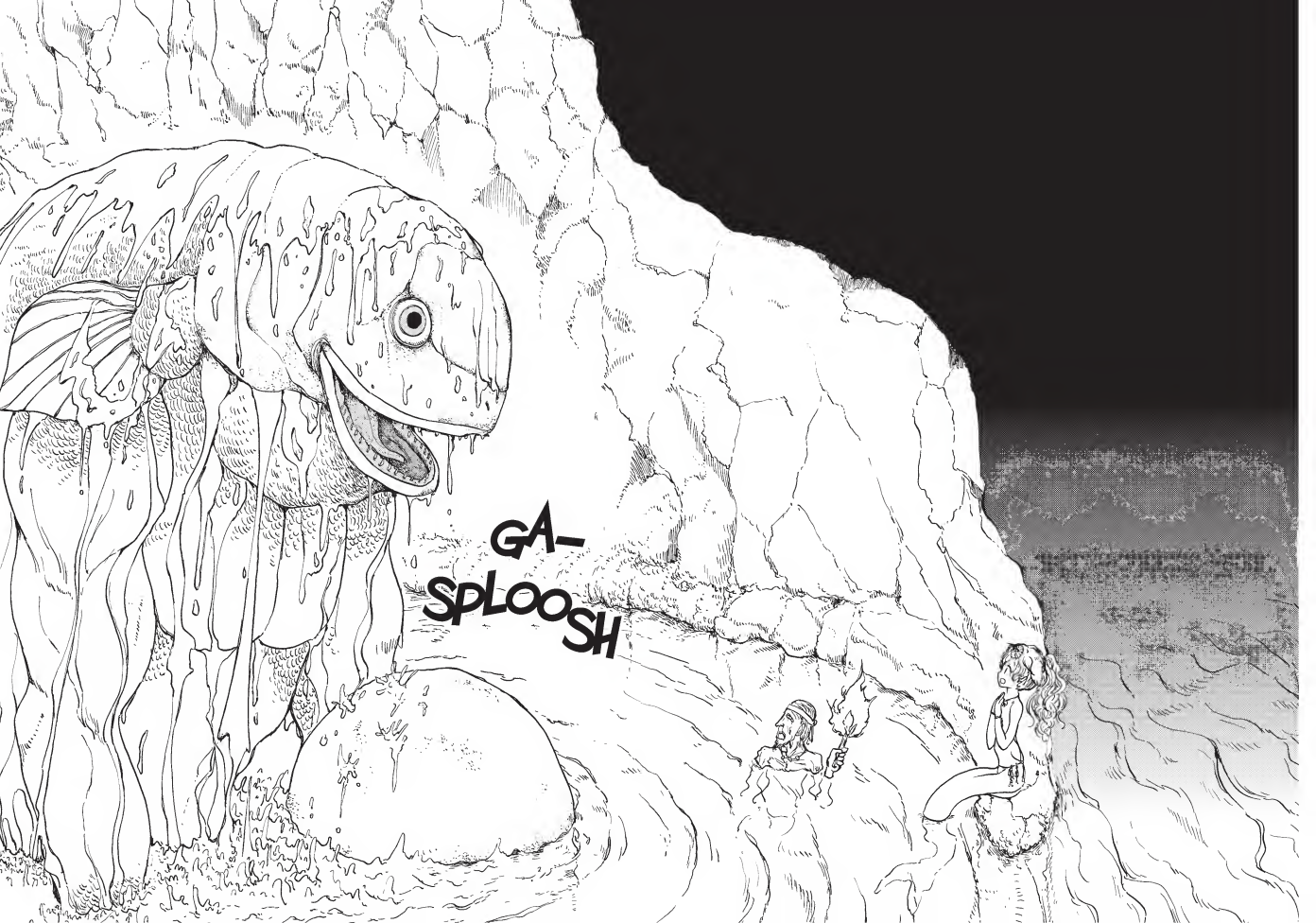

THAT'S SEXUAL HARASS-MENT!
MY GOODNESS, I THOUGHT YOU WAS A *BOY* JUST NOW.
YOU MUST BE TIRED FROM THEM SEA WAVES.
JUST REST Y'SELF RIGHT THERE FOR A BIT.
YOU MOUNTAIN FOLK ARE TOUGH COOKIES.
FWOOM

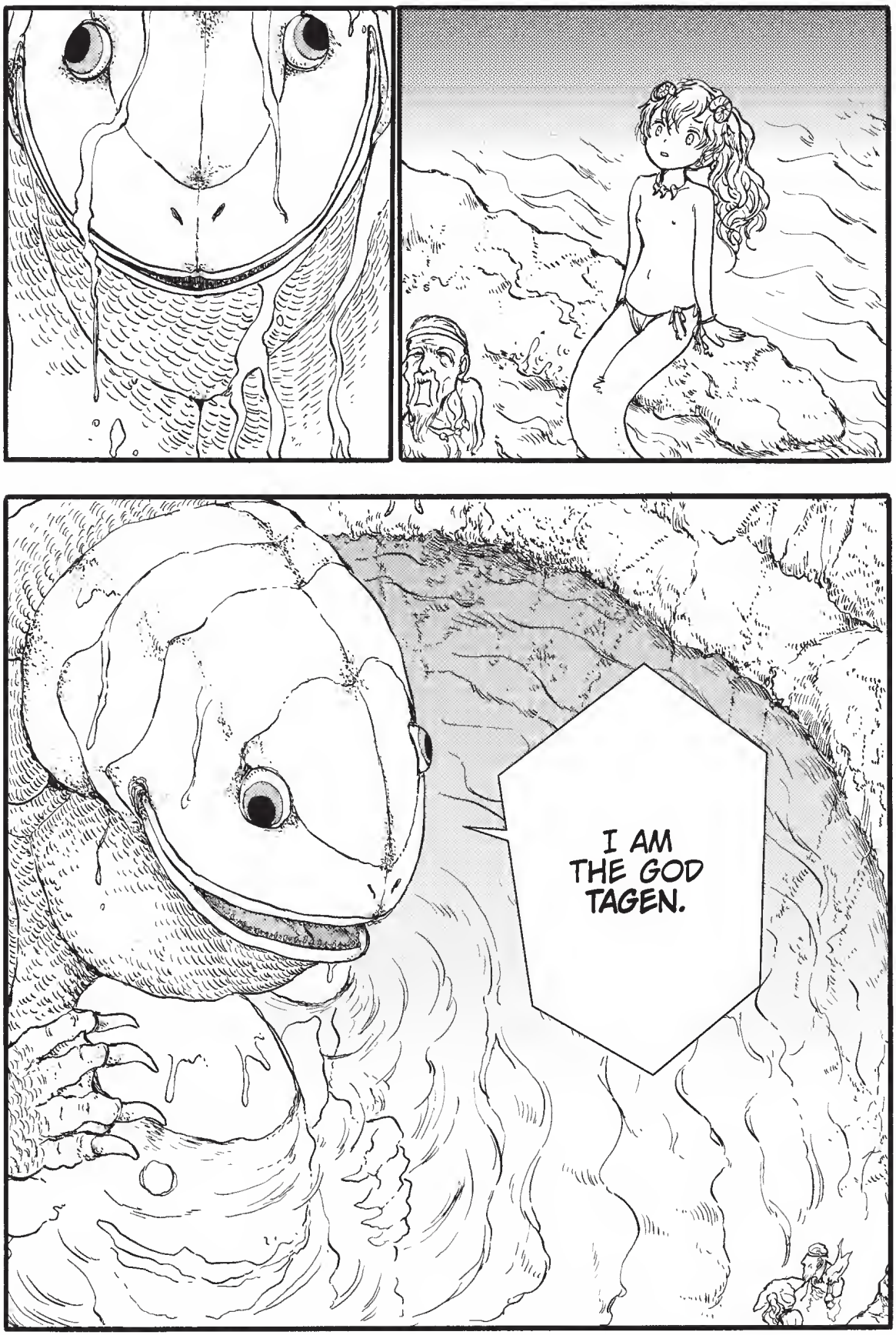

THAT THERE'S TAGEN, THE GOD OF MANY WORDS.
YOU MUST OFFER A SONG OF PRAISE TO HIM.

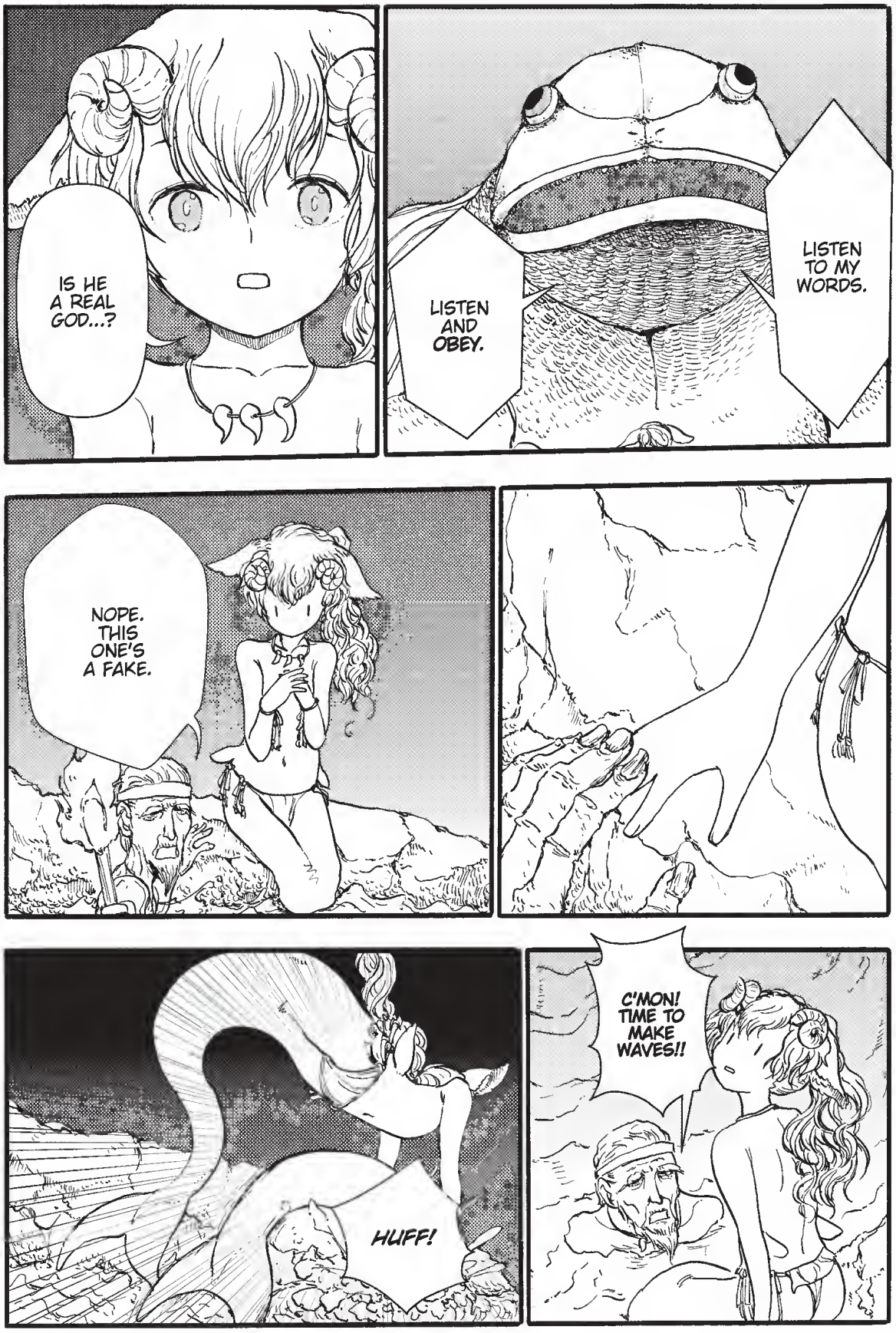

NOT TO MENTION OUR **AUDIENCE TURNOUT.**
YOUR SONG WILL DECIDE THE FATE OF OUR **FISHIN' HAUL,** AND BY EXTENSION THE **WELL-BEING** OF OUR VILLAGE.
BUT REALLY IT'S JUST LIKE YOUR TYPICAL CONCERT.
I've never had so many people show up.
WELL, I'M NO SUPER-STAR.

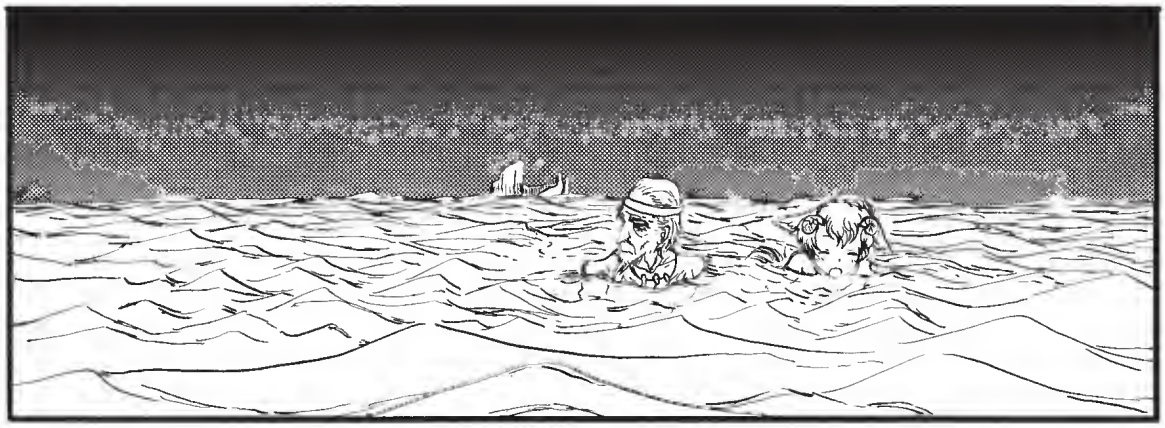


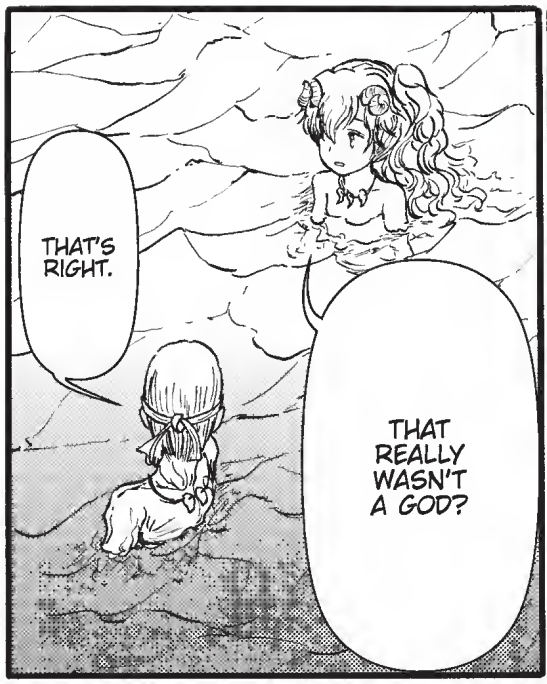

CONTINUE.
HE LIKES YOUR SINGIN'.
IT'S THE MANPHIN. TAGEN'S SERVANT.
WHAT'S THE MATTER?!
HM. THE MANPHIN IS SWIMMIN' AWAY!
Er...
EEEEE!


GA-
SPLOOSH

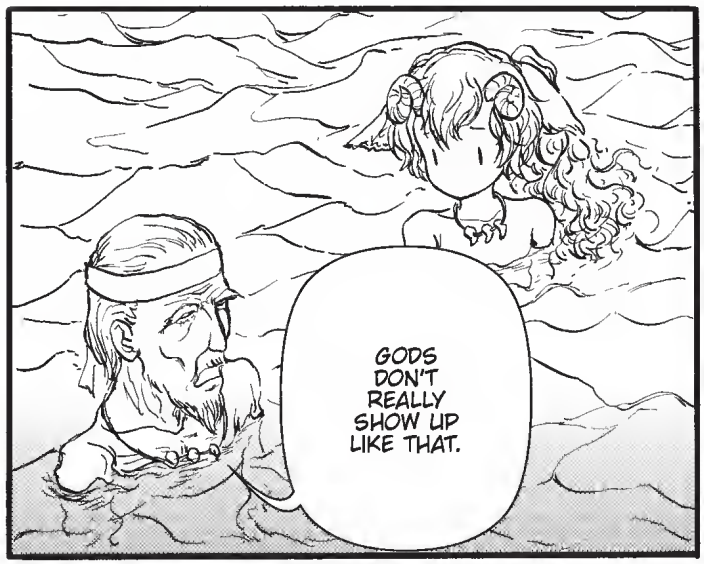

I AM
THE GOD
TAGEN.

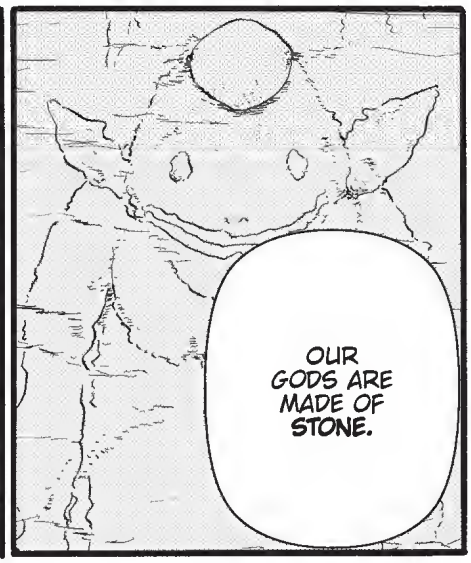

IS HE A REAL GOD...?
LISTEN AND OBEY.
LISTEN TO MY WORDS.
NOPE. THIS ONE'S A FAKE.
HUFF!
C'MON! TIME TO MAKE WAVES!!

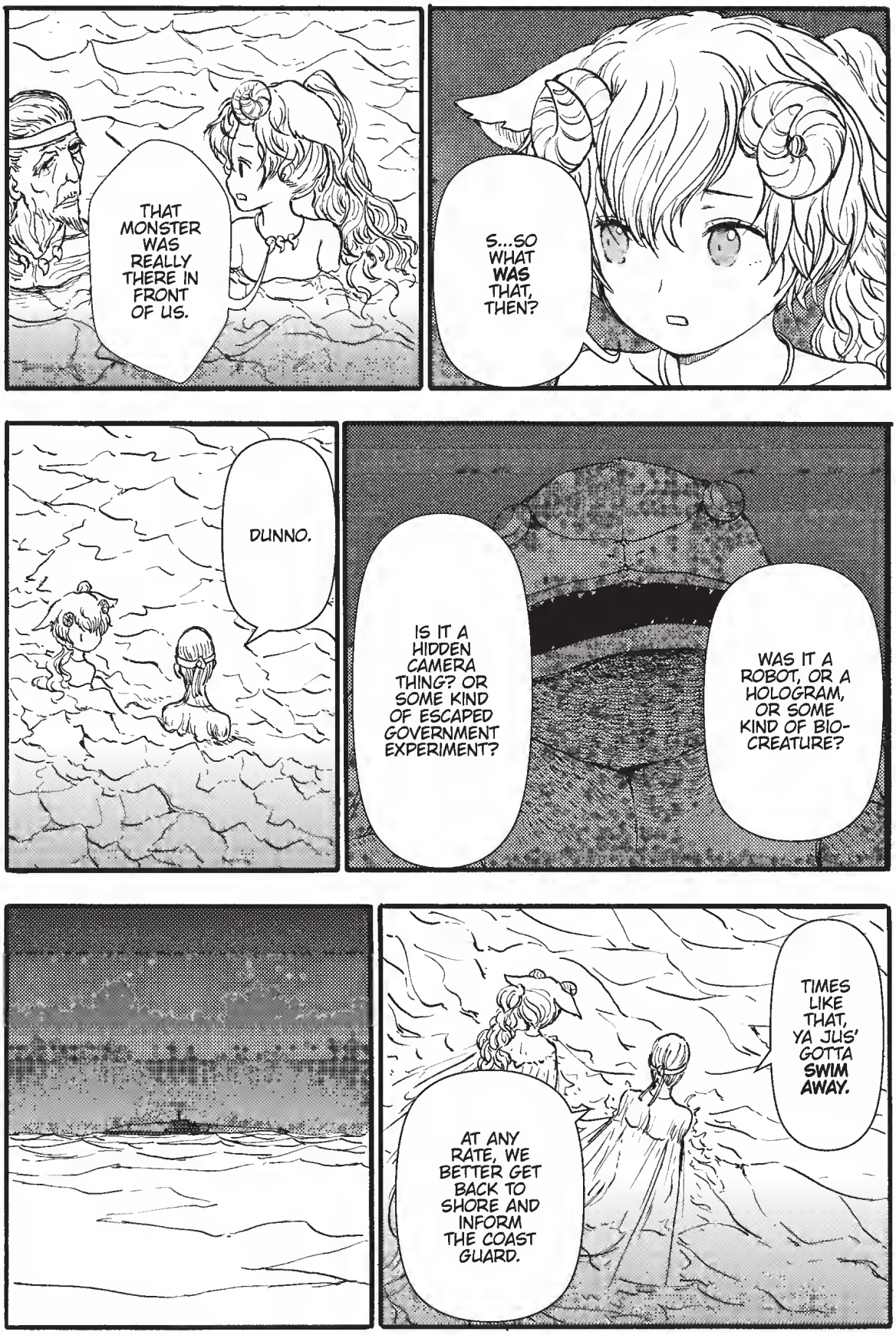


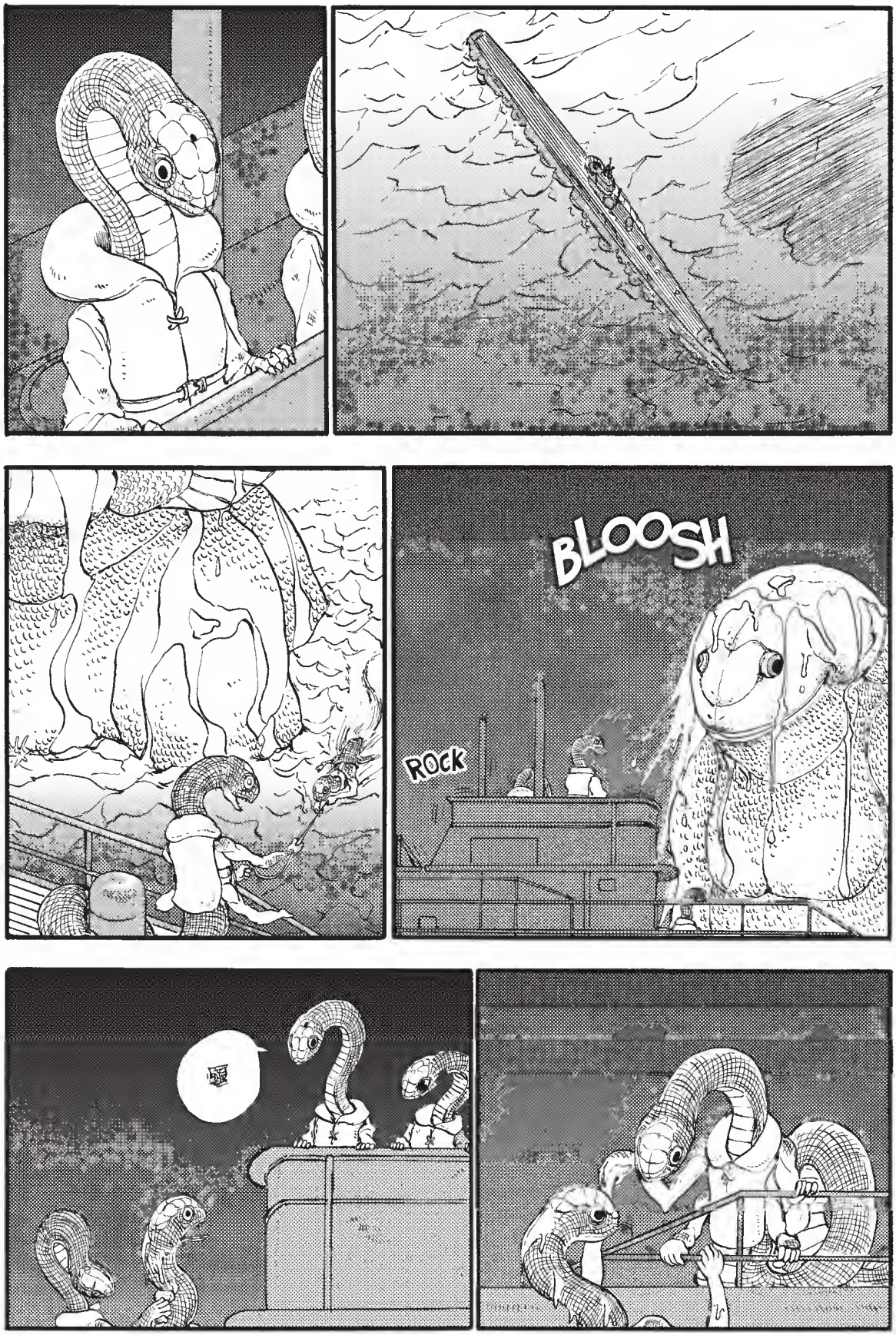

THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT REALLY WASN'T A GOD?

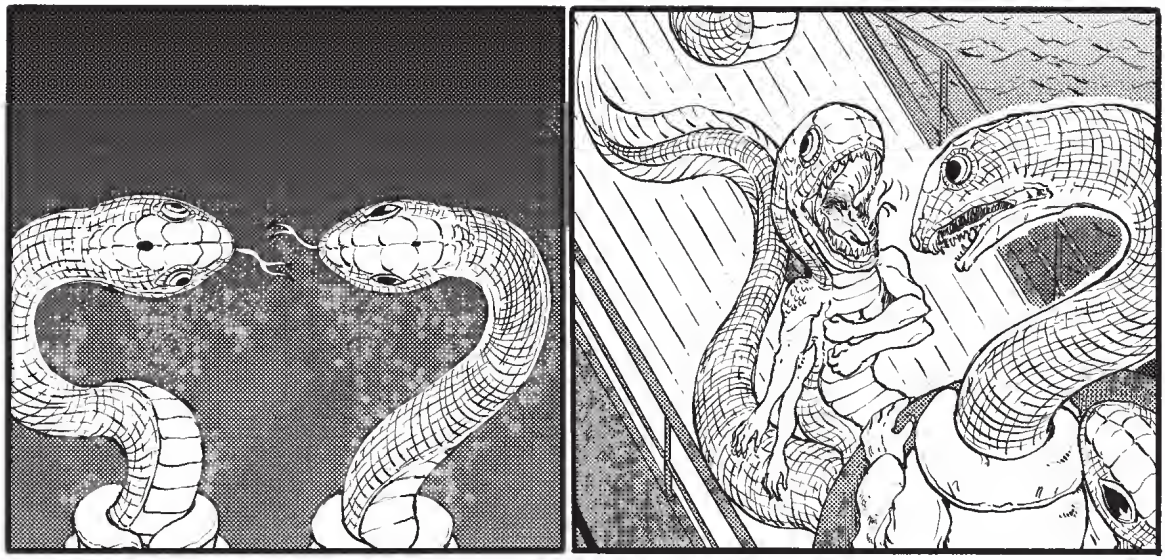
GOOD. HE AIN'T FOLLOWIN' AFTER US.


GODS DON'T REALLY SHOW UP LIKE THAT.

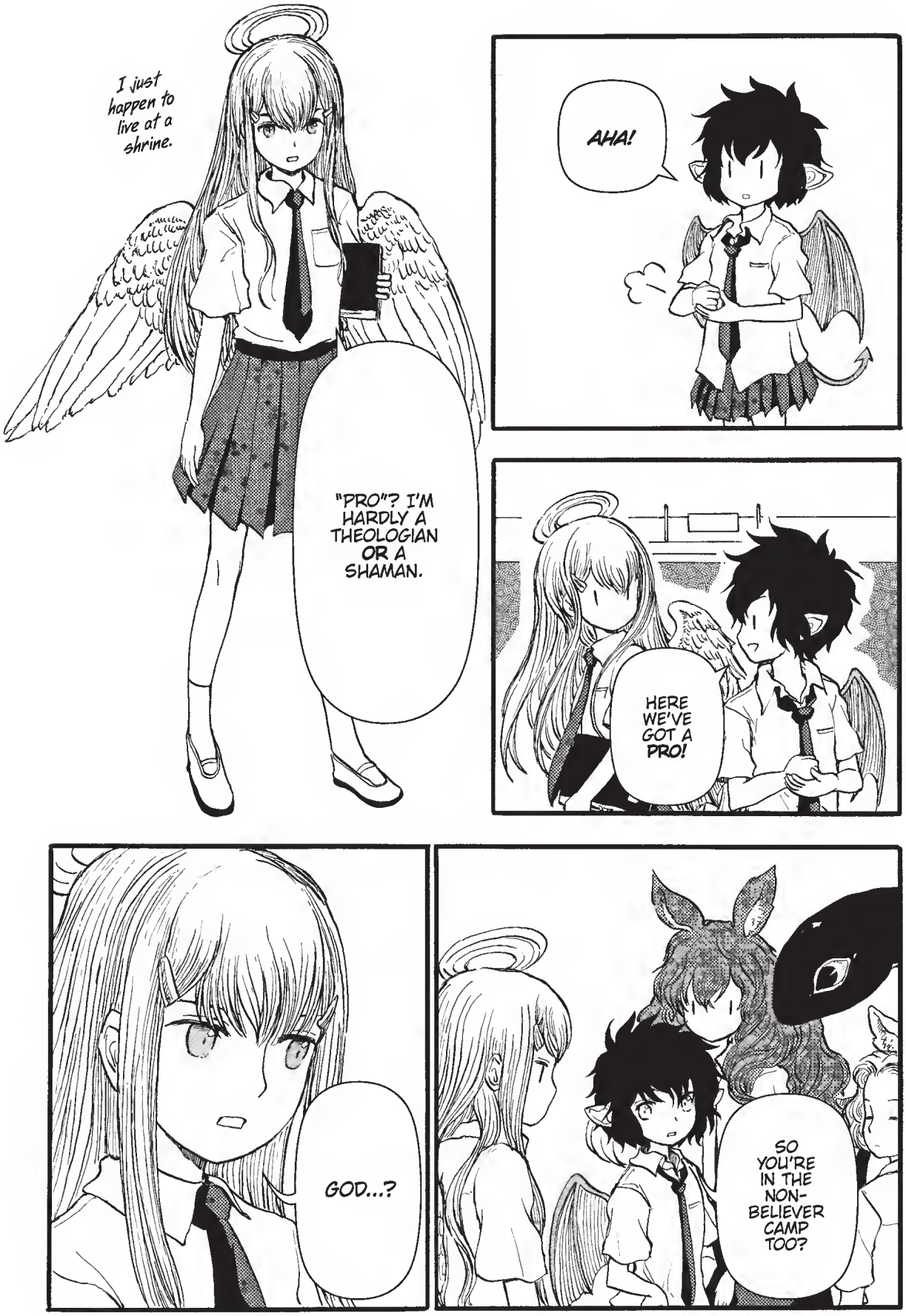

OUR GODS ARE MADE OF STONE.

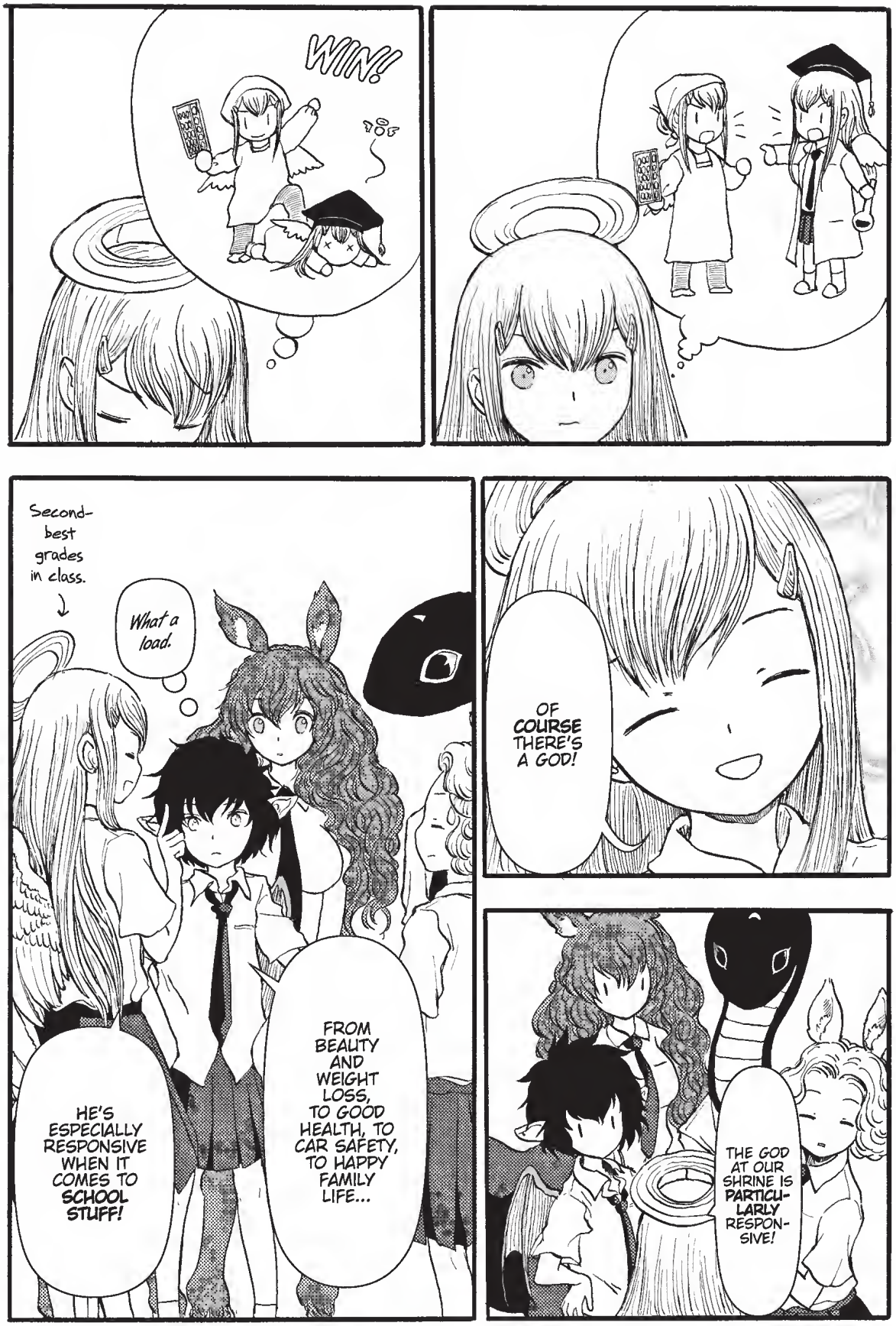

THAT MONSTER WAS REALLY THERE IN FRONT OF US.
S...SO WHAT **WAS** THAT, THEN?
DUNNO.
IS IT A HIDDEN CAMERA THING? OR SOME KIND OF ESCAPED GOVERNMENT EXPERIMENT?
WAS IT A ROBOT, OR A HOLOGRAM, OR SOME KIND OF BIO-CREATURE?
TIMES LIKE THAT, YA JUS' GOTTA **SWIM AWAY.**
AT ANY RATE, WE BETTER GET BACK TO SHORE AND INFORM THE COAST GUARD.

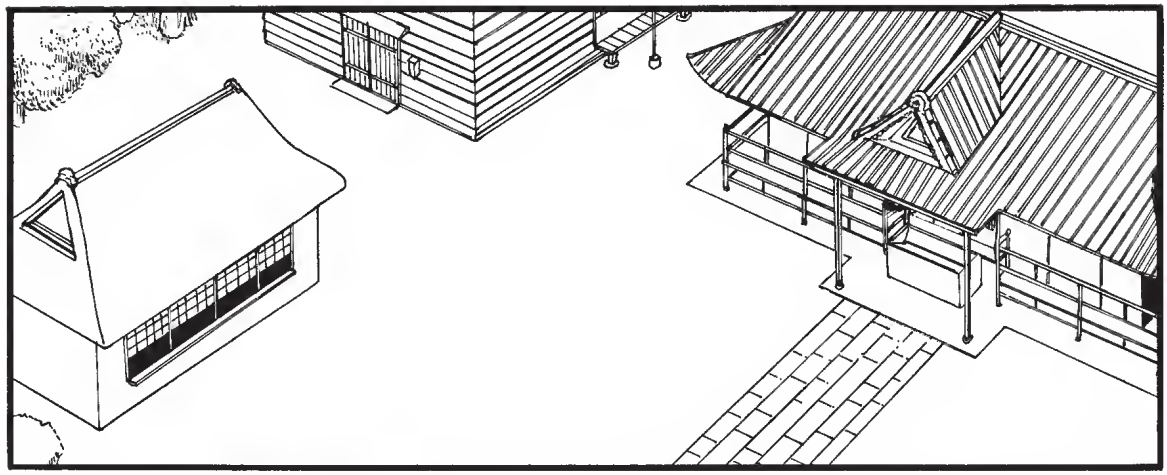

BLOOSH
ROCK

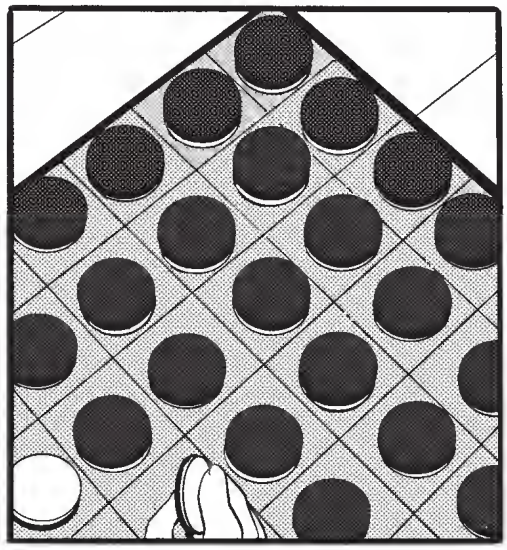


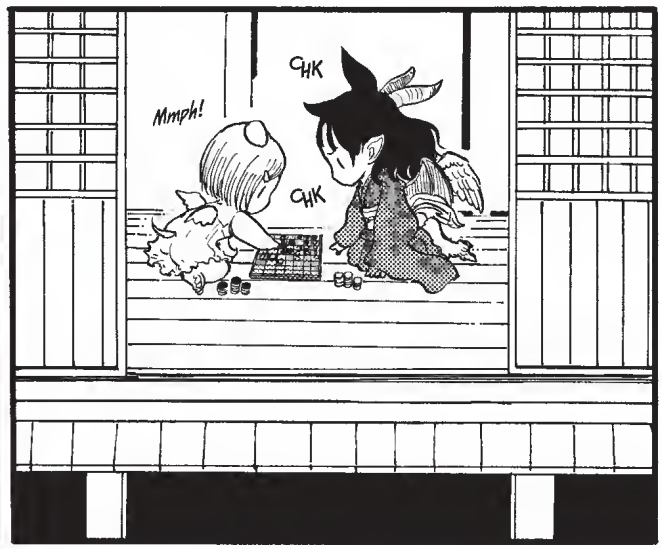
HUH? A GOD?
NO SUCH THING.
I MEAN, I GUESS THEY EXIST AS A CONCEPT 'N STUFF...

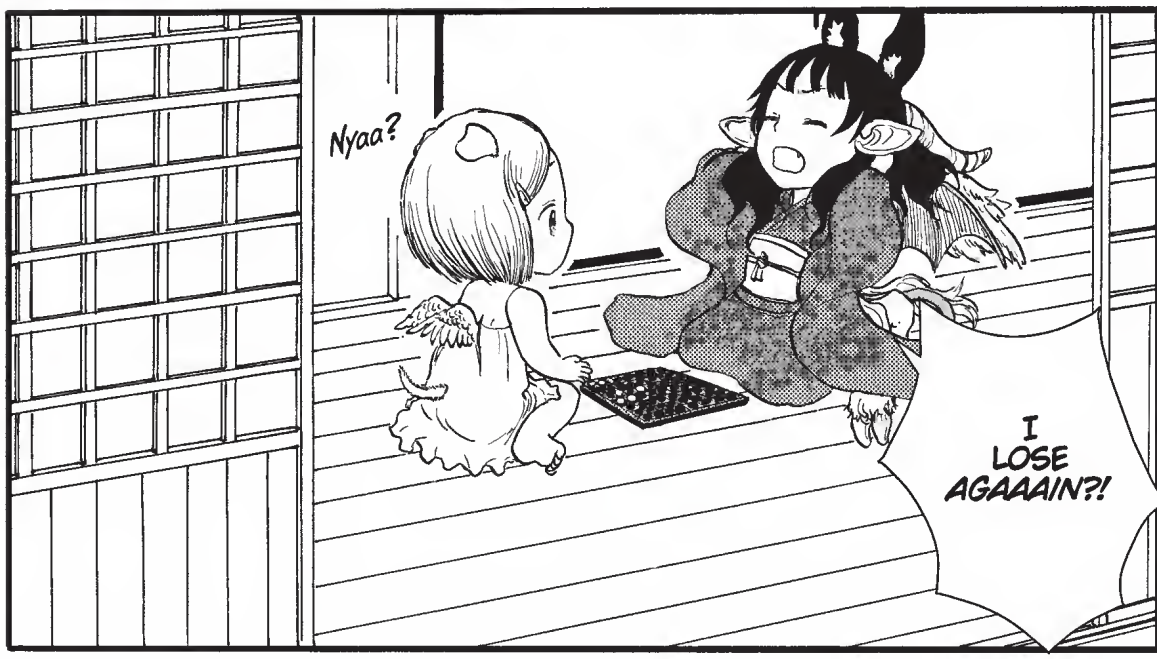

I just happen to live at a shrine.
"PRO"? I'M HARDLY A THEOLOGIAN OR A SHAMAN.
AHA!
HERE WE'VE GOT A PRO!
GOD...?
SO YOU'RE IN THE NON-BELIEVER CAMP TOO?


WIN!!
Second-best grades in class.
What a load.
HE'S ESPECIALLY RESPONSIVE WHEN IT COMES TO SCHOOL STUFF!
FROM BEAUTY AND WEIGHT LOSS, TO GOOD HEALTH, TO CAR SAFETY, TO HAPPY FAMILY LIFE...
OF COURSE THERE'S A GOD!
THE GOD AT OUR SHRINE IS PARTICULARLY RESPONSIVE!






CHK
Mmph!
CHK

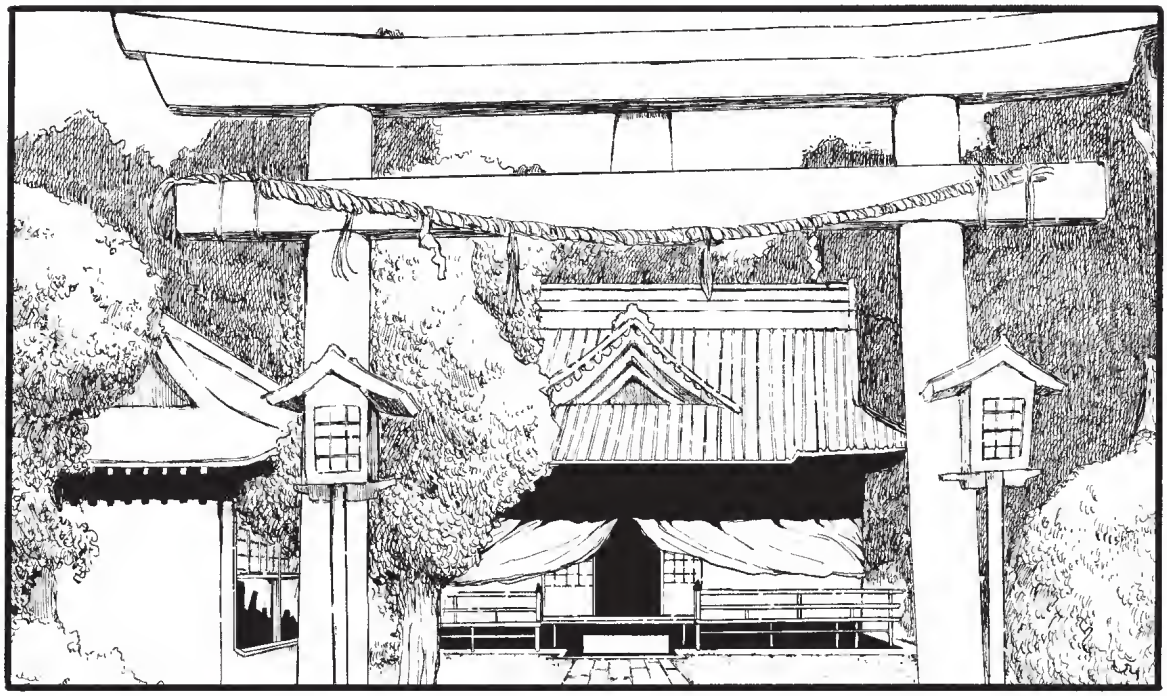

Nyaa?
I LOSE AGAAAIN?!

A CentaUr's Life

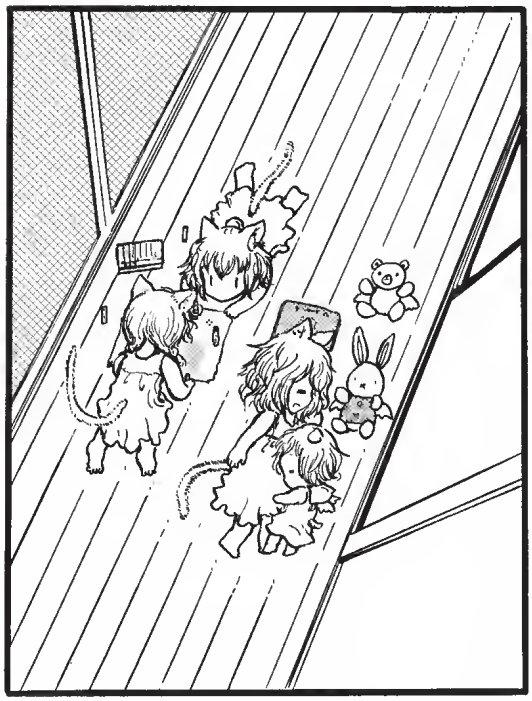
GENETICS MADE EASY: LESSON 6
HUMAN BEINGS HAVE GENES FROM OTHER RACES

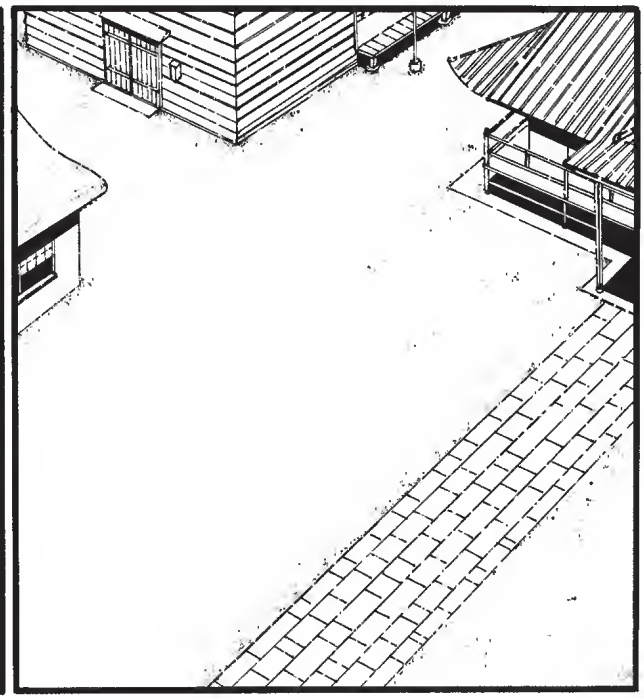
ABOUT ONE IN EVERY HUNDRED HYBRID CHILDREN IS BORN WITH TRAITS FOUND NEITHER IN THE MOTHER NOR FATHER. FOR INSTANCE, THE CHILD OF AN ANGELFOLK COUPLE MIGHT BE BORN WITH HORNS. THIS PHENOMENON IS DUE NOT ONLY TO MALFUNCTION OF THE OFFSPRING'S RACE-DETERMINING GENES, BUT ALSO THE FACT THAT VIRTUALLY ALL PEOPLE POSSESS GENES CONTAINING INFORMATION ON VIRTUALLY ALL RACES. EVEN IF, FOR EXAMPLE, YOU HAVE A FAMILY LINE THAT HAD BIRTHED NOTHING BUT CENTAURS FOR GENERATIONS, A CENTAUR WITH HORNS COULD BE BORN INTO THE FAMILY IF GOATFOLK BLOOD WERE MIXED IN SOMEWHERE IN THE ANCESTRY. RACIALLY MIXED BLOODLINES MEAN THAT HORNLESS PARENTS COULD POTENTIALLY GIVE BIRTH TO HORNED OFFSPRING, OR WINGLESS PARENTS TO WINGED ONES (THIS IS KNOWN AS "ATAVISTIC" HEREDITY).

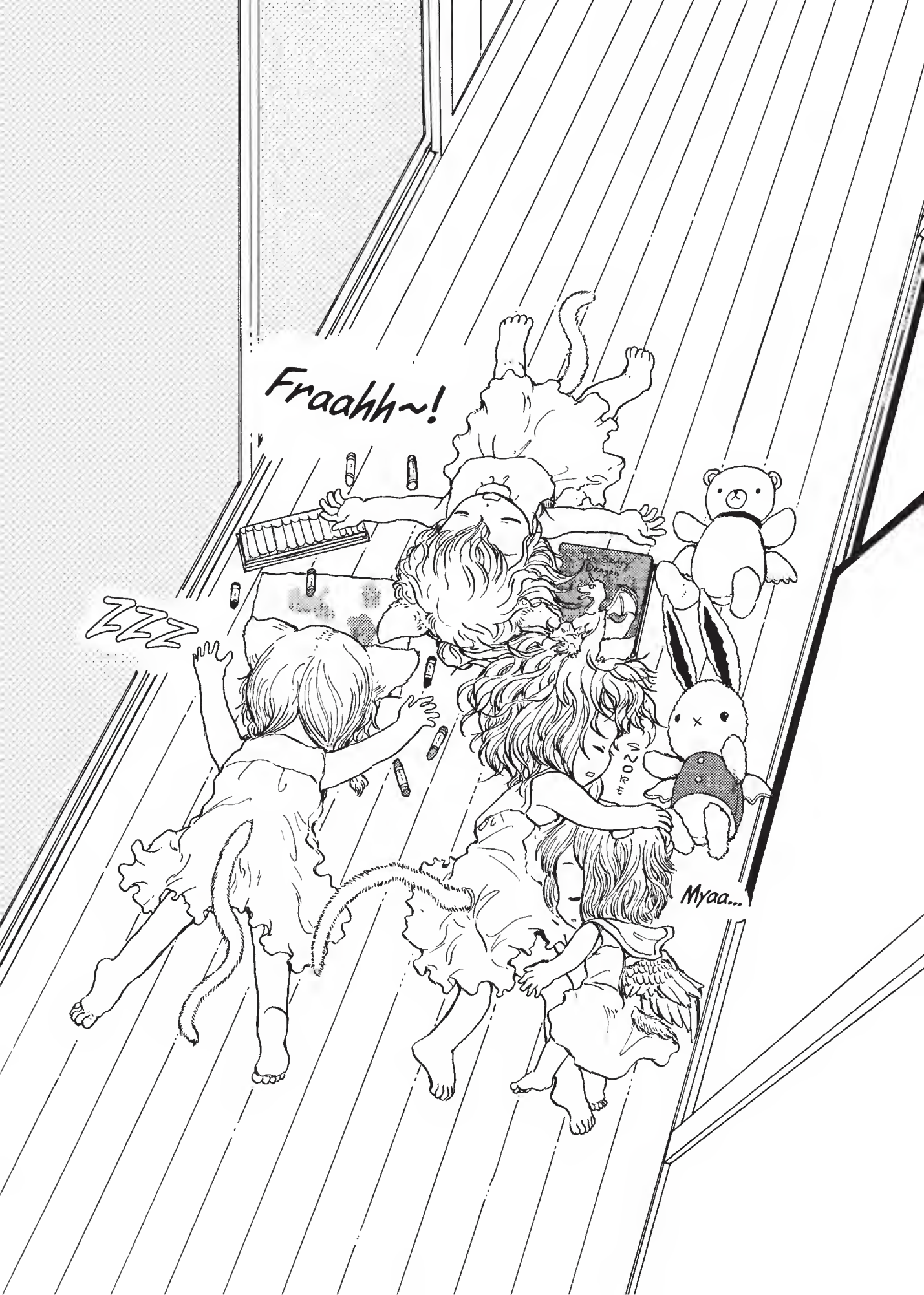
IN CENTAURS, THE OCCURRENCE OF HYBRIDISM IS RELATIVELY RARE ACROSS THE GLOBE DUE TO THEIR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND. NEVERTHELESS, THEY POSSESS THE GENES OF VIRTUALLY ALL OTHER RACES. IT IS THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT MERFOLK GENES ARE UNCOMMON IN PEOPLE LIVING IN LANDLOCKED REGIONS OF NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE (WHILE VIRTUALLY ALL JAPANESE HAVE MERFOLK GENES).



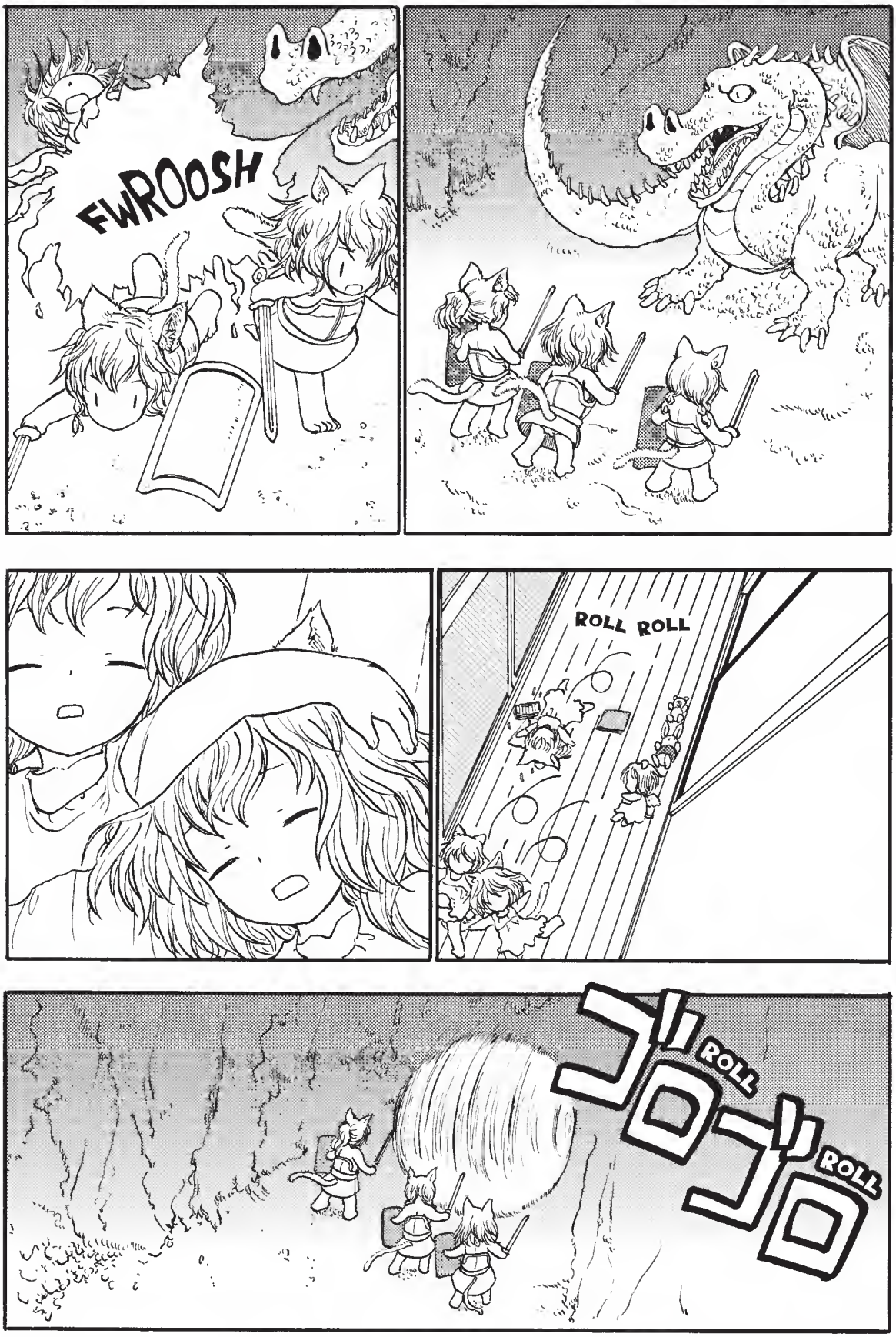
CHAPTER 36

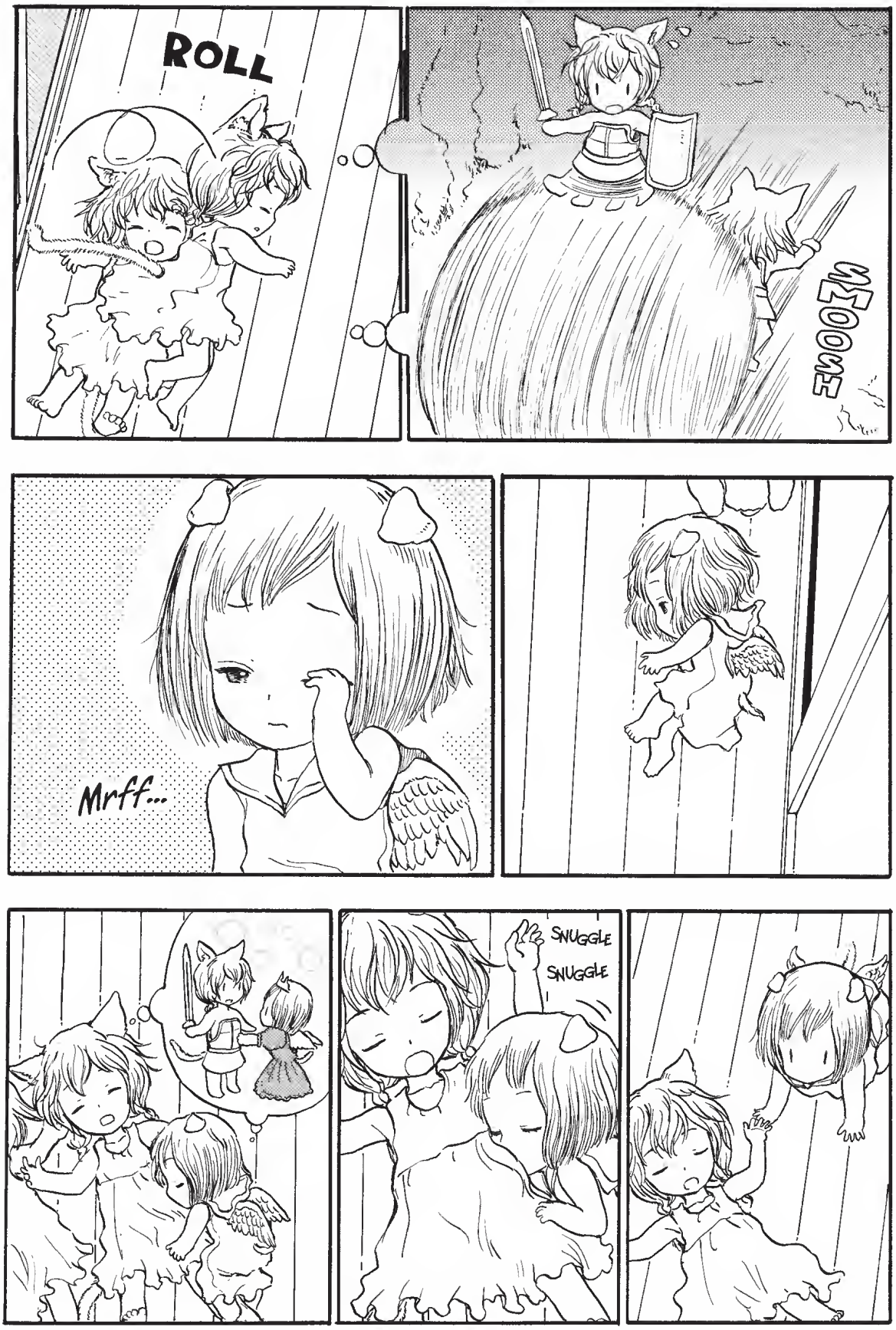





Fraahh~!
ZZZ
Myaa...

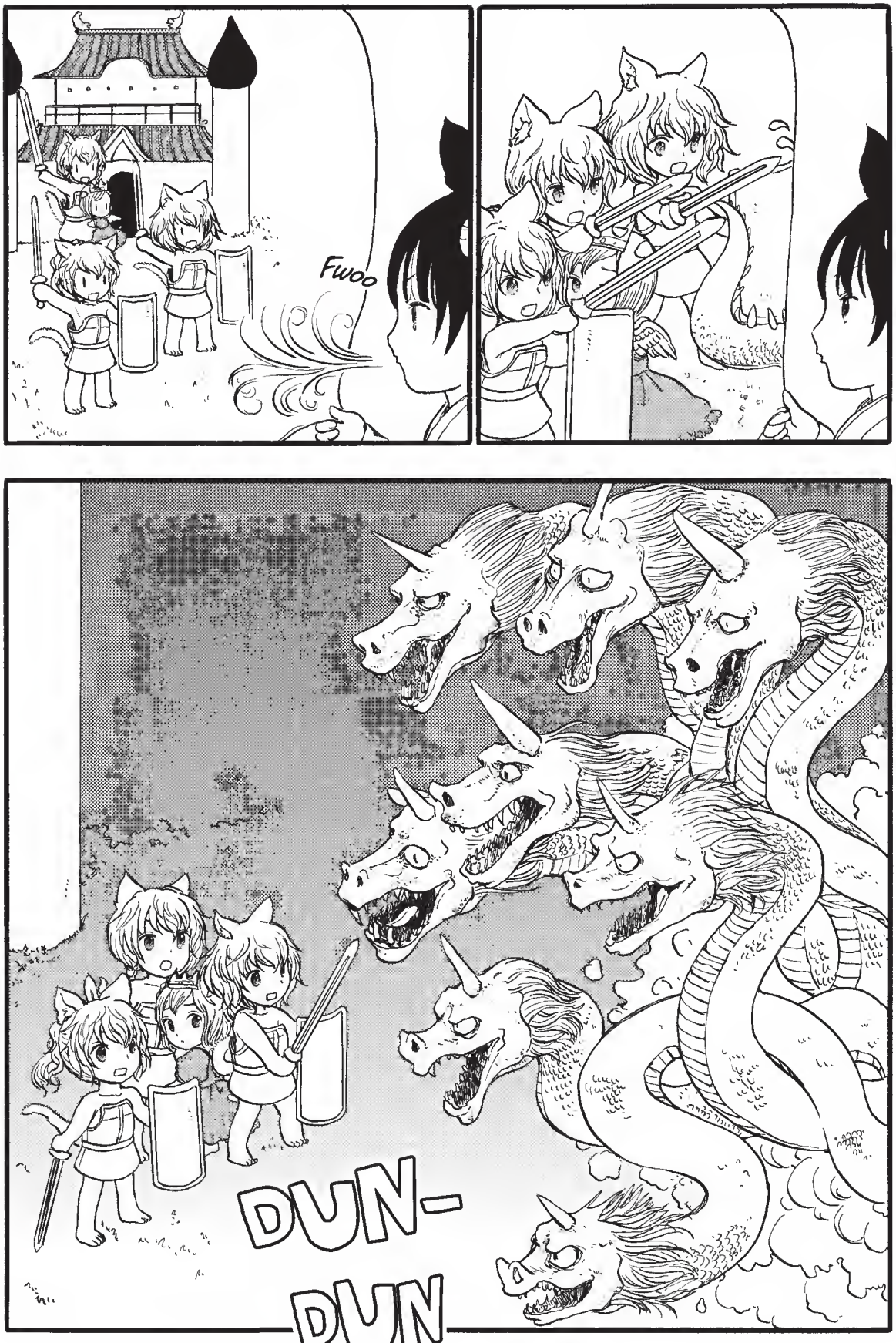
HUP
NYAA COW
Myaa~!
SNOOOOZE
NUZZLE
NUZZLE
BAP
ROLL
WRAP
Grah?!


FWROOSH
ROLL ROLL
ゴロゴロ
ROLL
ROLL

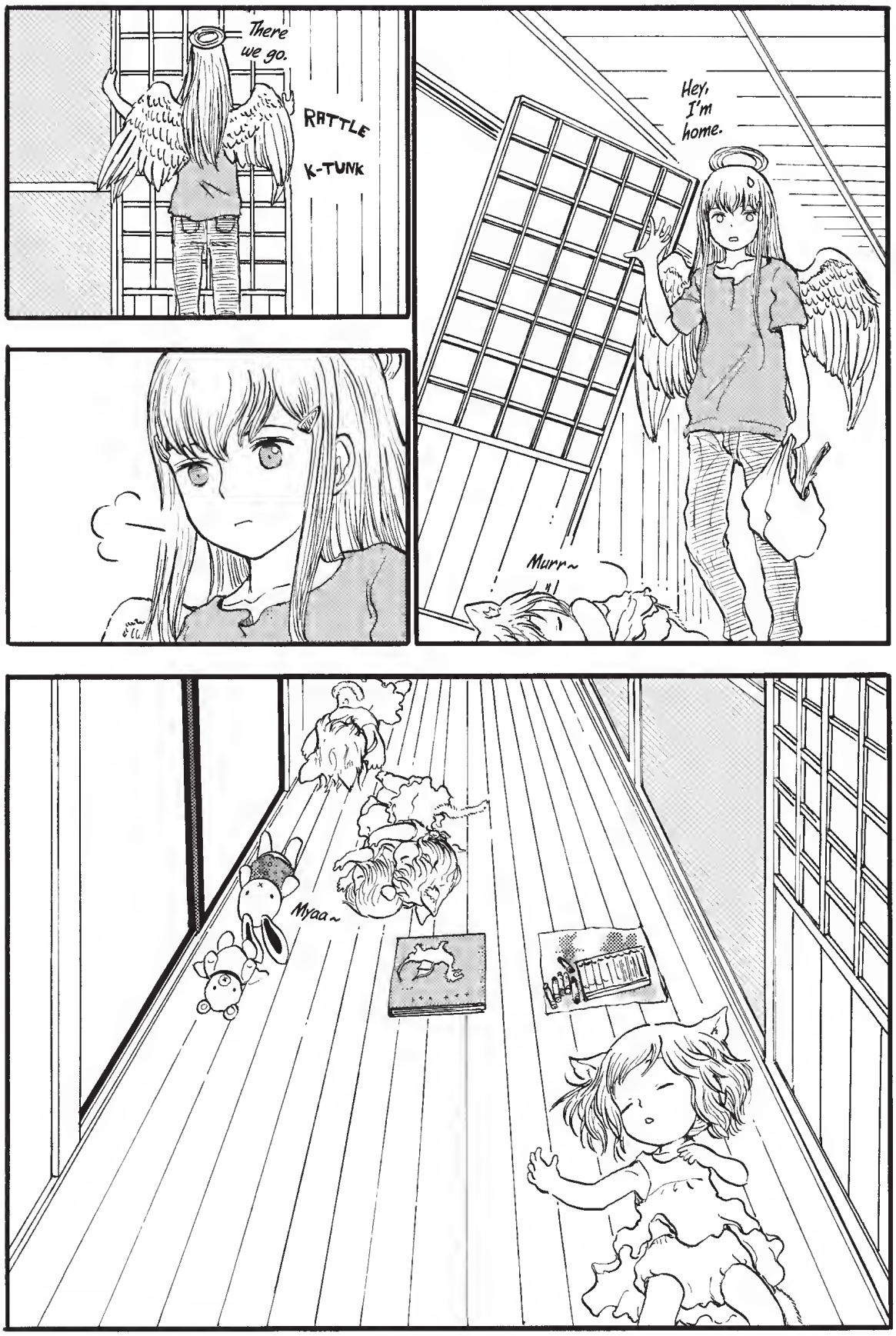

ROLL
SWOOSH
Mrff...
SNUGGLE
SNUGGLE

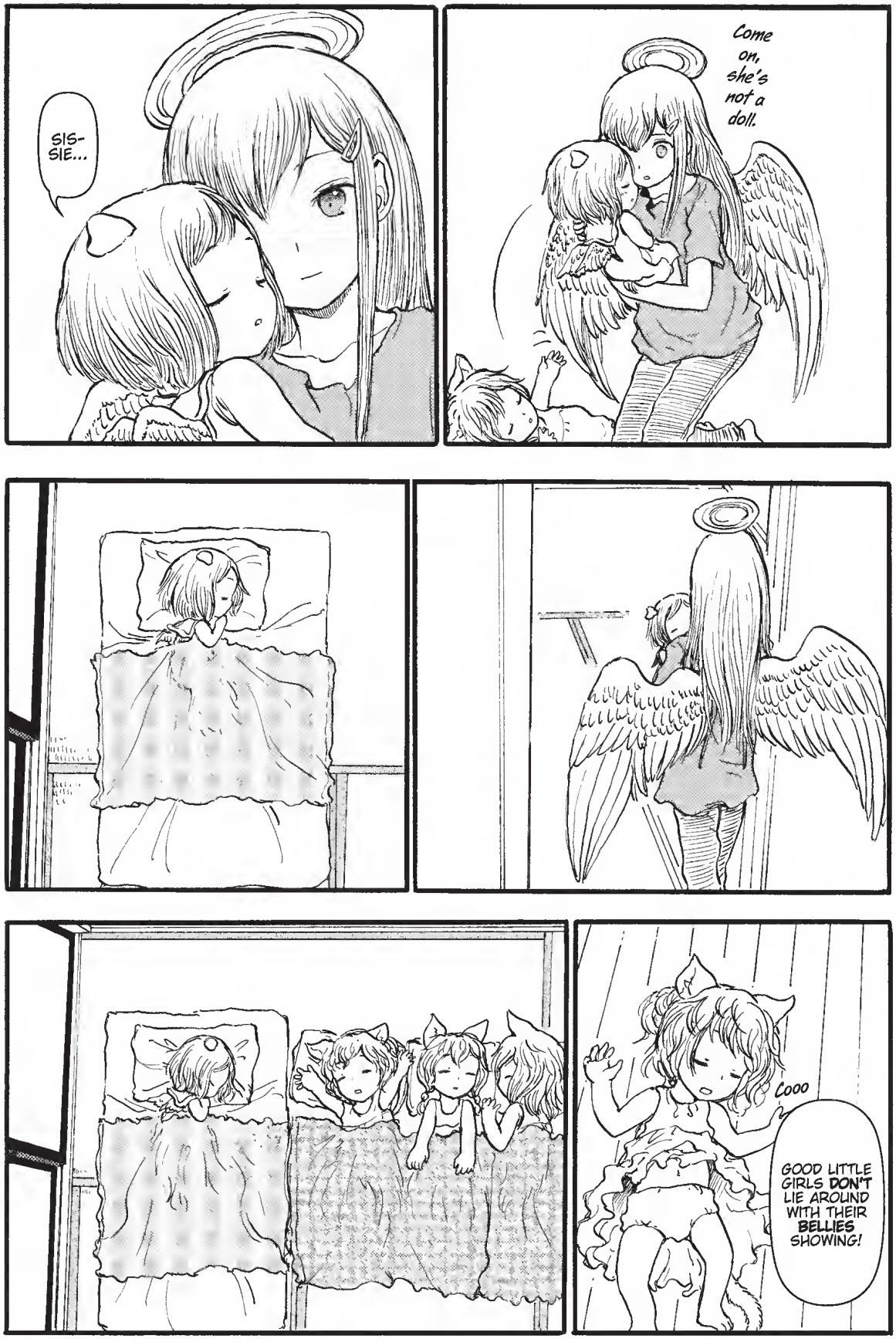
Pro Baseball Board GX
SHOGI
Fun for the whole family!
Hup!
WHAP
zzzzz

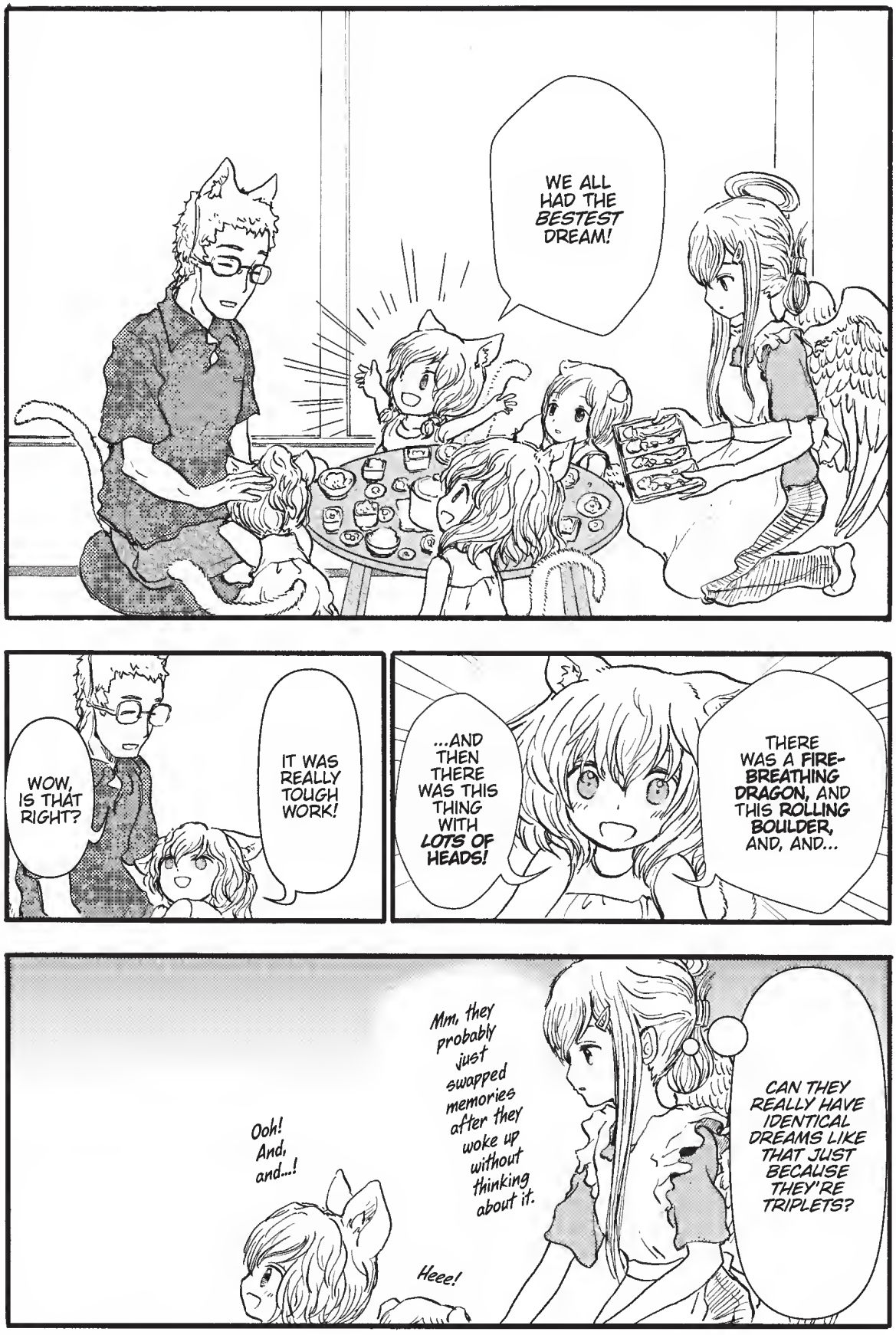
SZOOOM
Fwaah
Wake up.
SZOOM
PAT PAT
Pro Baseball


Fwoo
DUN-
DUN

ROLL
ROLL
Nyaa...
GR-DONK
WHACK
TOPPLE


There we go.
RATTLE
K-TUNK
Hey, I'm home.
Murr~
Myaa~


SIS-
SIE...
Come on, she's not a doll.
Cooo
GOOD LITTLE GIRLS DON'T LIE AROUND WITH THEIR BELLIES SHOWING!


WE ALL HAD THE BESTEST DREAM!
THERE WAS A FIRE-BREATHING DRAGON, AND THIS ROLLING BOULDER, AND, AND...
...AND THEN THERE WAS THIS THING WITH LOTS OF HEADS!
IT WAS REALLY TOUGH WORK!
WOW, IS THAT RIGHT?
CAN THEY REALLY HAVE IDENTICAL DREAMS LIKE THAT JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE TRIPLETS?
Mm, they probably just swapped memories after they woke up without thinking about it.
Heee!
Ooh! And, and...!

A CentaUr's Life

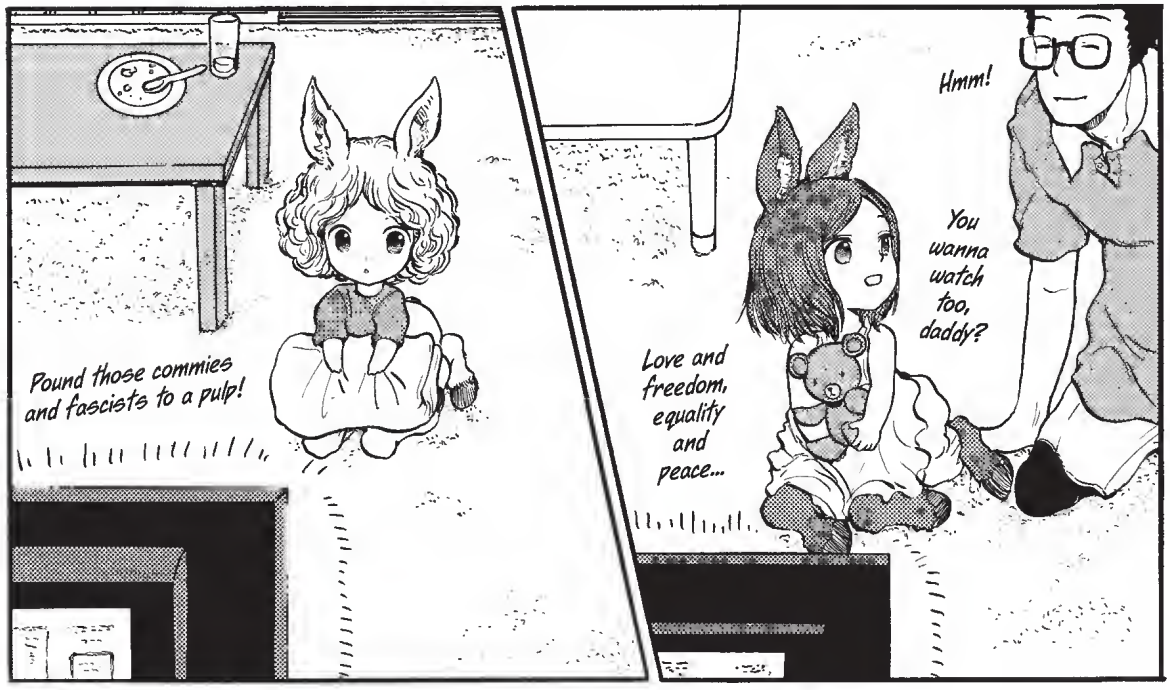
GENETICS MADE EASY: LESSON 7
PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH ATAVISTIC HEREDITY

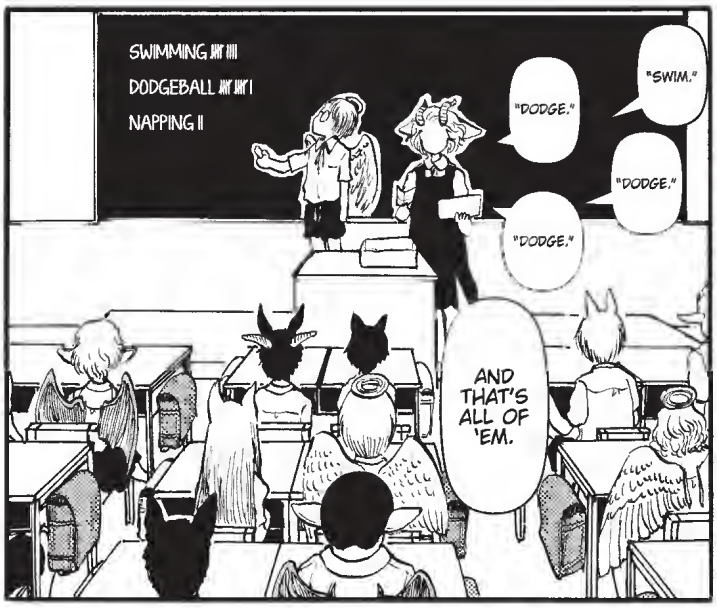
WHILE SOME SCHOLARS LONG HELD THEORIES ABOUT ATAVISTIC HEREDITY--THAT IS, THE APPEARANCE OF TRAITS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH EITHER PARENT'S RACE--THEY WERE UNABLE TO TEST THESE THEORIES UNTIL THE ADVENT OF GENE-ANALYZING TECHNOLOGY. EVEN TODAY, KNOWLEDGE ON THE MATTER IS HARDLY COMMON. CONSEQUENTLY, IT HAS LONG BEEN A CAUSE OF TROUBLE FOR MANY MARRIED COUPLES. NOW, HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE TO CONFIRM BLOOD RELATION BY MEANS OF MOLECULAR BIOLOGY. CHILD ABUSE IS OF COURSE AN ABHORRENT ACT REGARDLESS OF THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF A BLOOD TIE, BUT THOSE WHO HAVE DOUBT THAT A CHILD IS IN FACT THEIR OWN SHOULD PROMPTLY GET CHECKED AT THE NEAREST MEDICAL CENTER. MEDICAL CENTERS ARE EQUIPPED TO OFFER PSYCHOLOGICAL CARE AND LEGAL SUPPORT IN THE EVENT OF THE UNEXPECTED. ONE SHOULD NEVER RESORT TO HOMEMADE DETERMINING METHODS, OR WORSE STILL, PRACTICES ROOTED IN KOOKY SUPERSTITION. WHILE FALSE DIAGNOSES HAVE STIRRED UP ATTENTION IN THE MASS MEDIA AT TIMES, SUCH PROBLEMS CAN BE AVOIDED BY SIMPLY SEEKING A SECOND OPINION. YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE ARE NO MATCH FOR THOSE OF A PAID PROFESSIONAL.

WHILE EXTREMELY RARE, THERE ARE KNOWN CASES OF BABIES OF NON-HYBRID PARENTS BEING BORN WITH TRAITS FROM THREE SEPARATE RACES. THESE CASES ARE PERHAPS THE GREATEST EVIDENCE THAT PEOPLE DO IN FACT POSSESS THE GENES OF ALL OTHER RACES. WHILE THE LIKELIHOOD WOULD BE QUITE LOW, IT IS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE FOR ALL RACES TO MANIFEST IN A SINGLE ORGANISM.

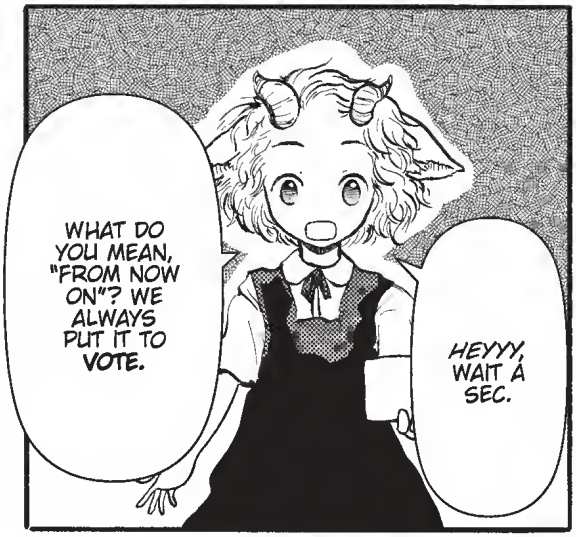
IIIIT'S SHOW-TIME!
MAGICAL GIRL PRETTY HORN
GOOD BOYS AND GIRLS REMEMBER TO WATCH IN A WELL-LIT ROOM AND SIT AWAY FROM THE TV!

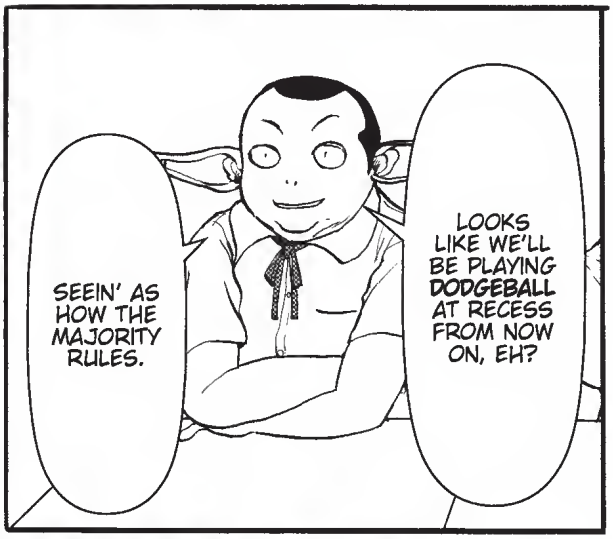
CHAPTER 37

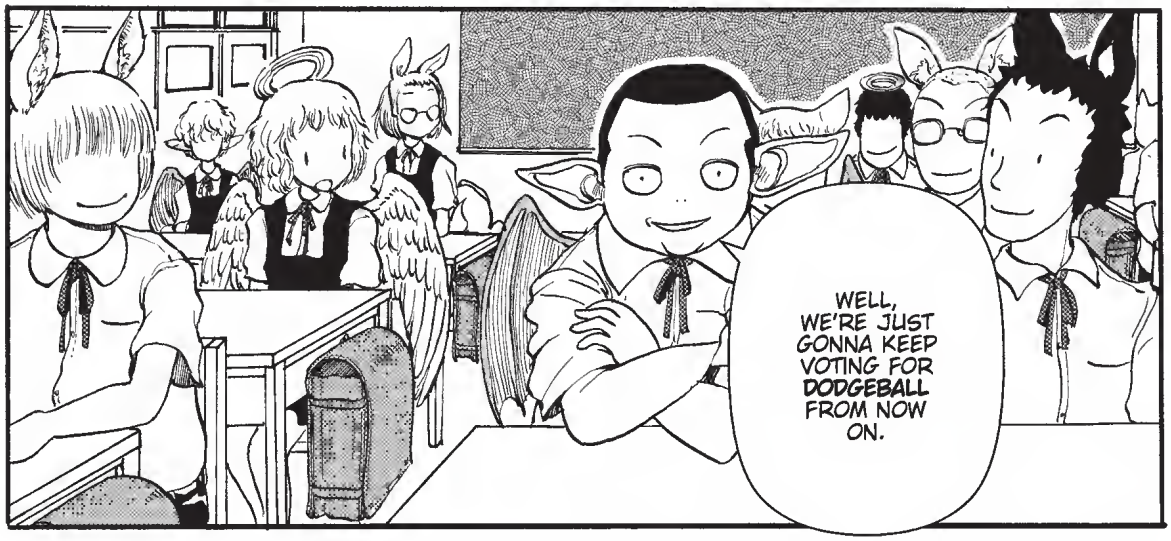

Pound those commies and fascists to a pulp!
Love and freedom, equality and peace...
Hmm!
You wanna watch too, daddy?

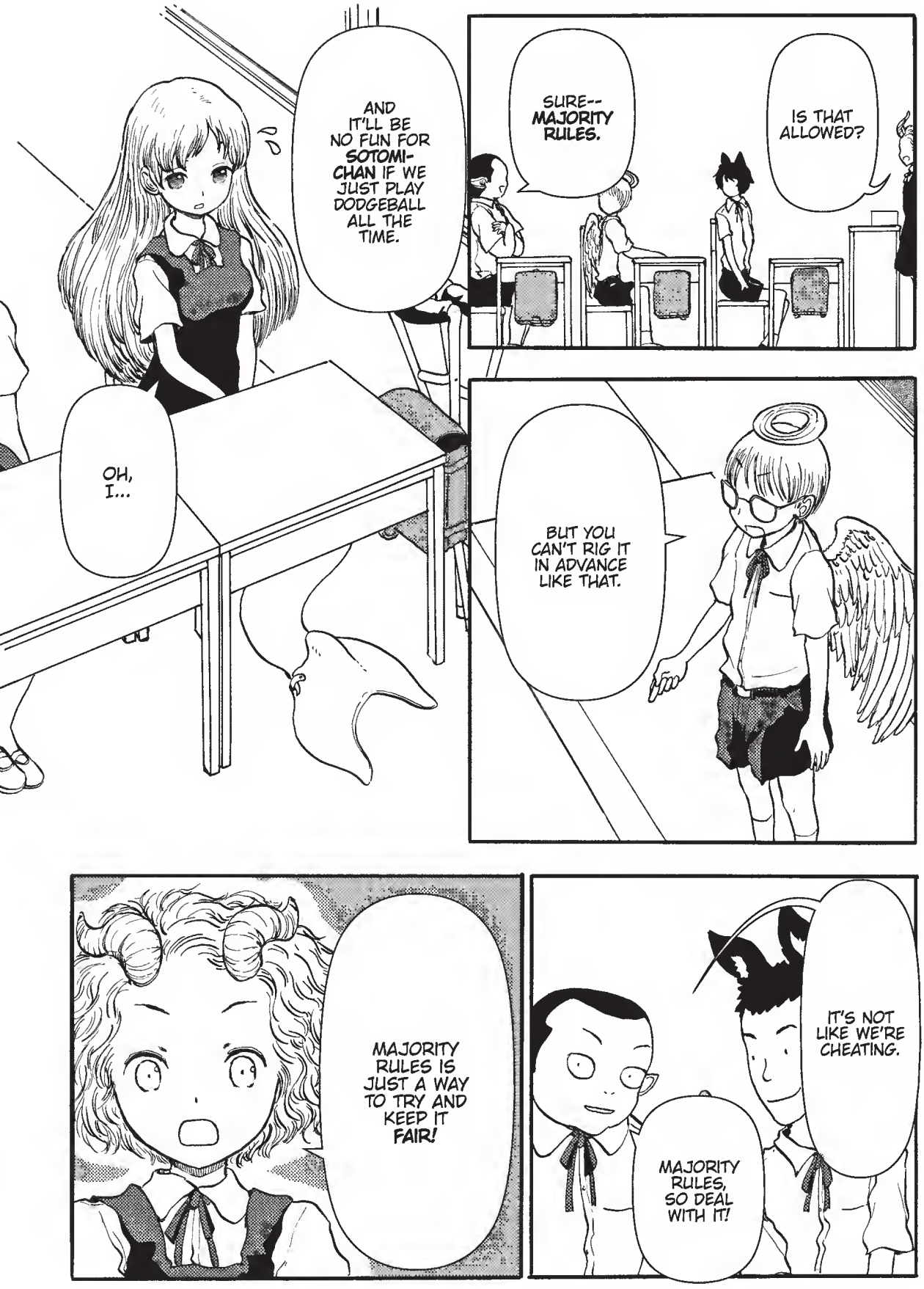


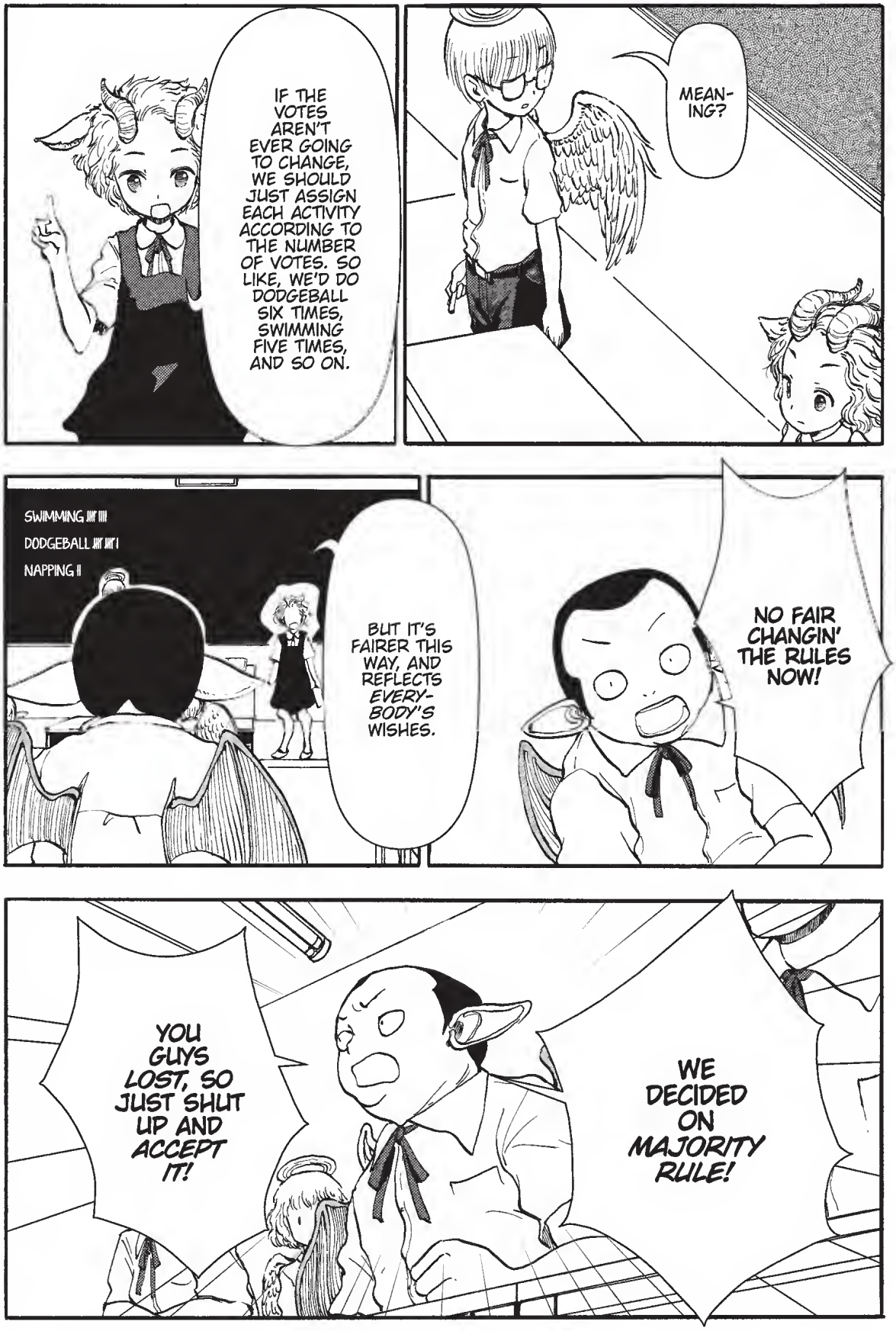
Episode
23
Warped Democracy

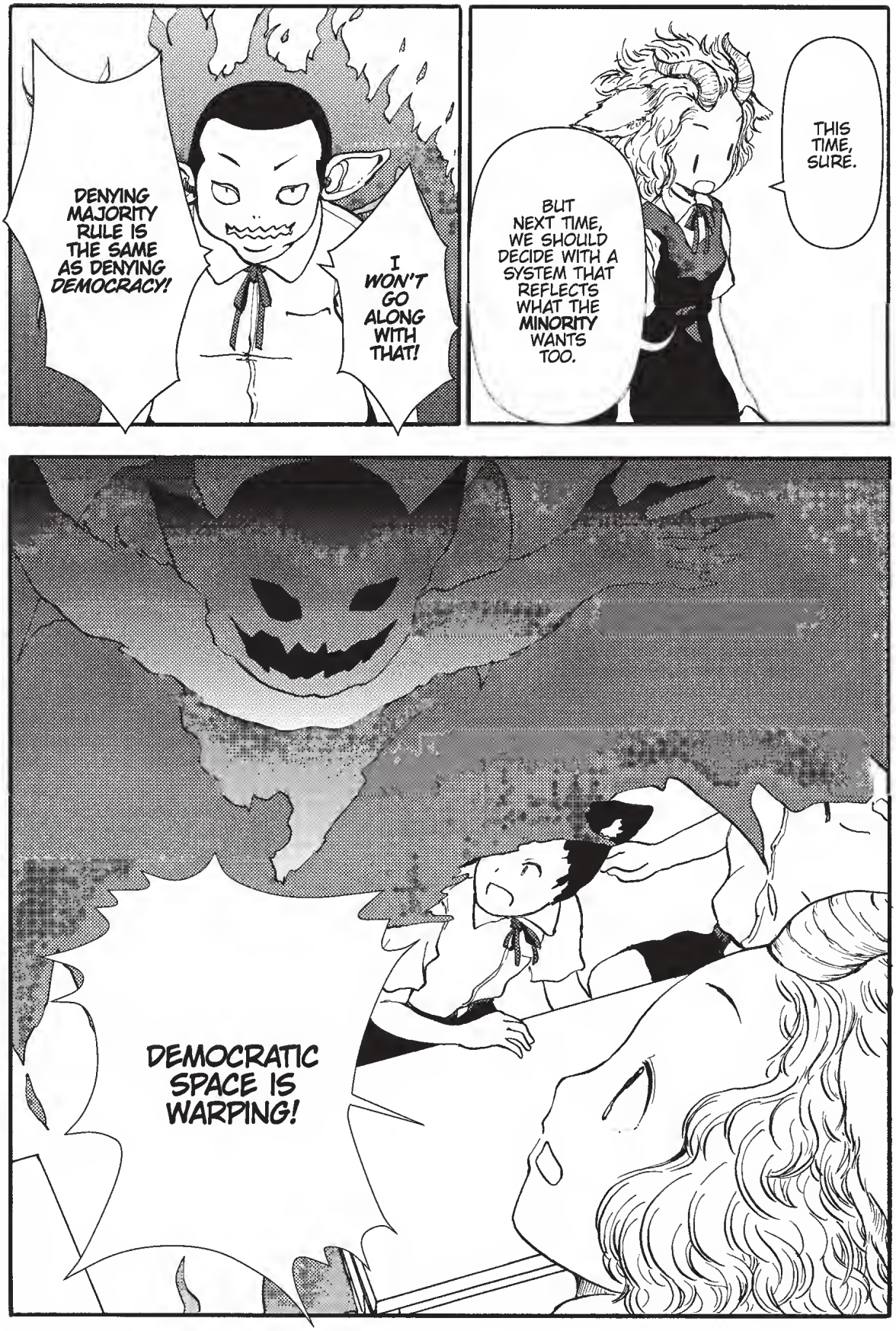


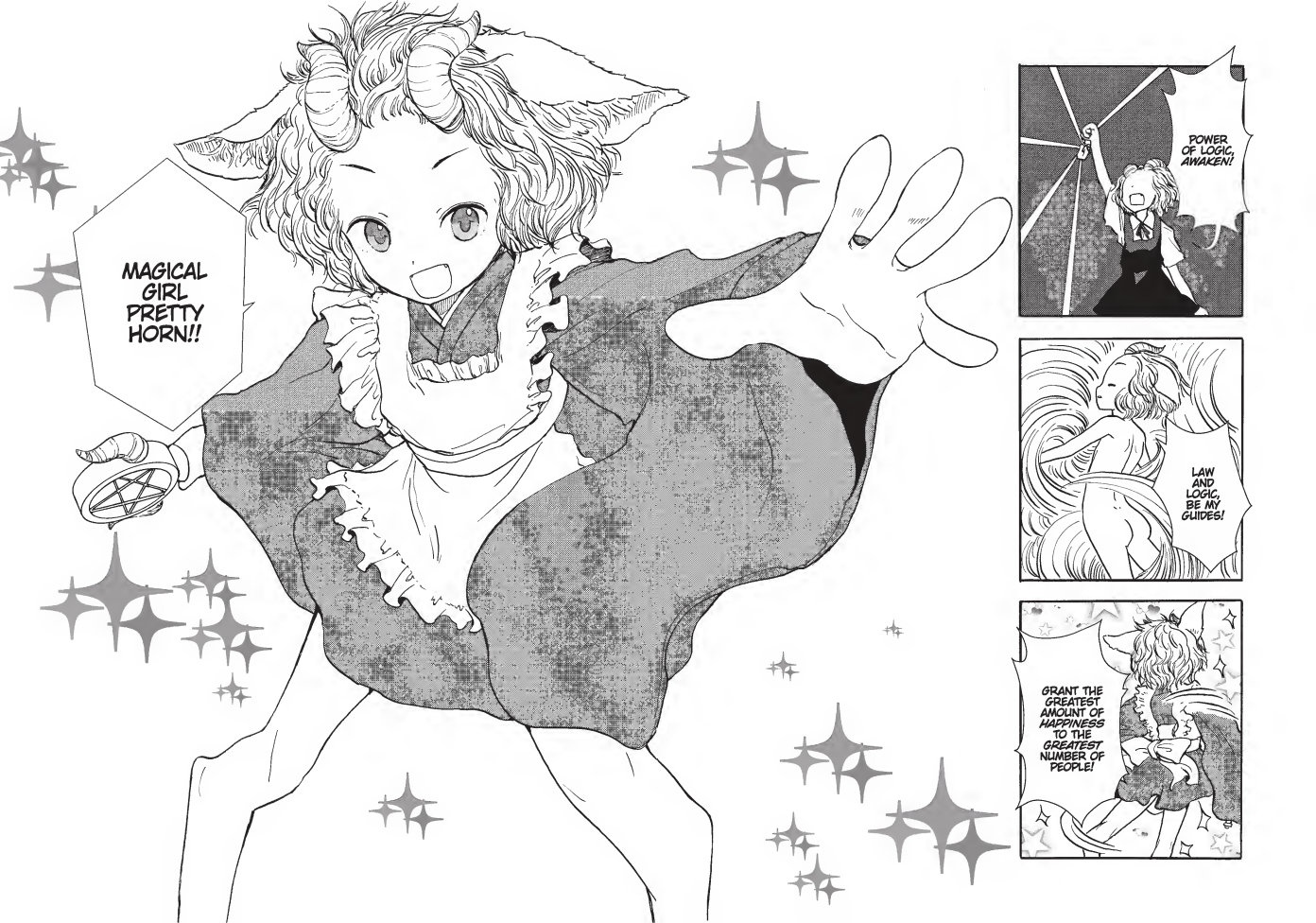


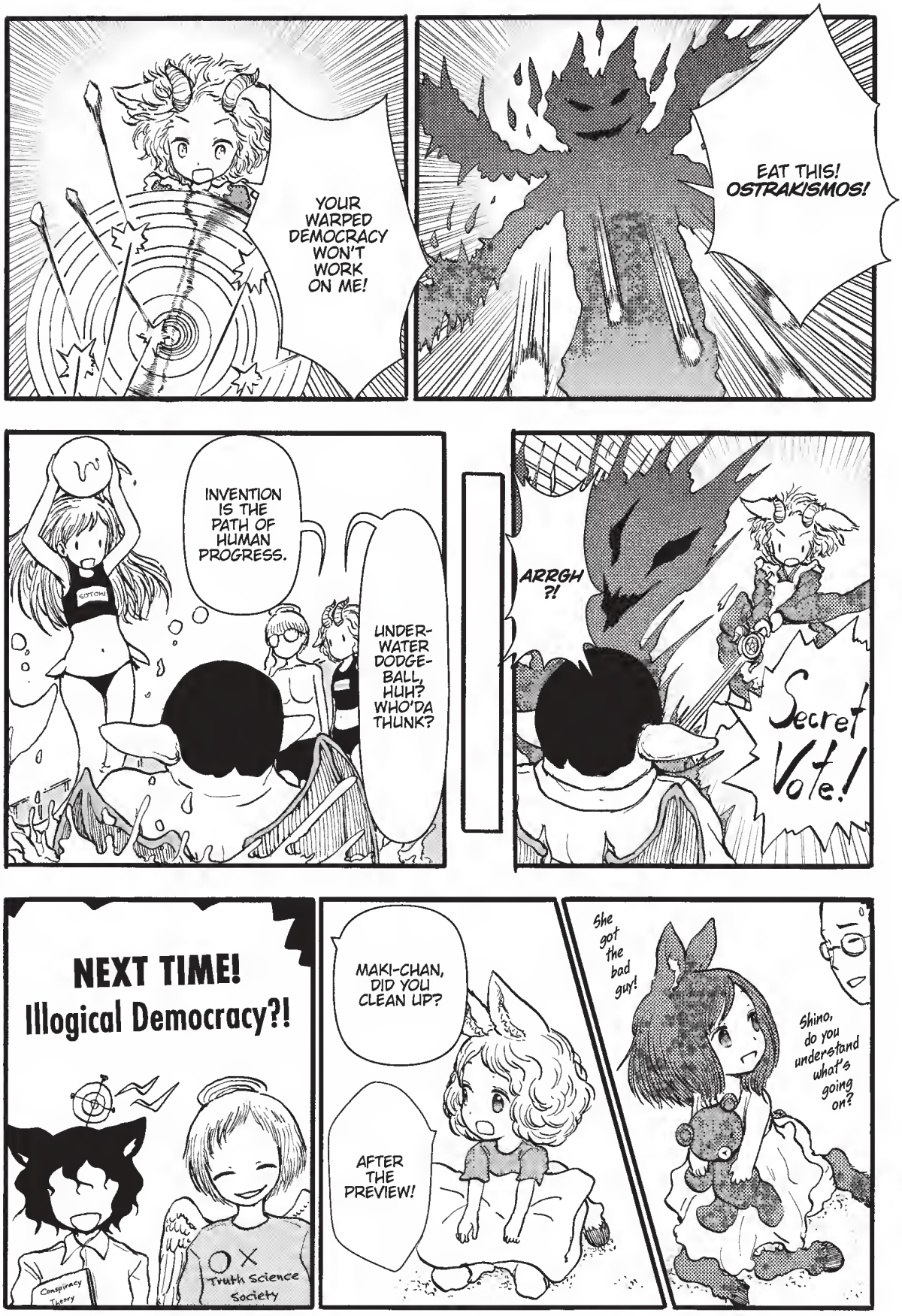



AND IT'LL BE NO FUN FOR SOTOMI-CHAN IF WE JUST PLAY DODGEBALL ALL THE TIME.
OH, I...
SURE-- MAJORITY RULES.
IS THAT ALLOWED?
BUT YOU CAN'T RIG IT IN ADVANCE LIKE THAT.
MAJORITY RULES IS JUST A WAY TO TRY AND KEEP IT FAIR!
MAJORITY RULES, SO DEAL WITH IT!
IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE CHEATING.

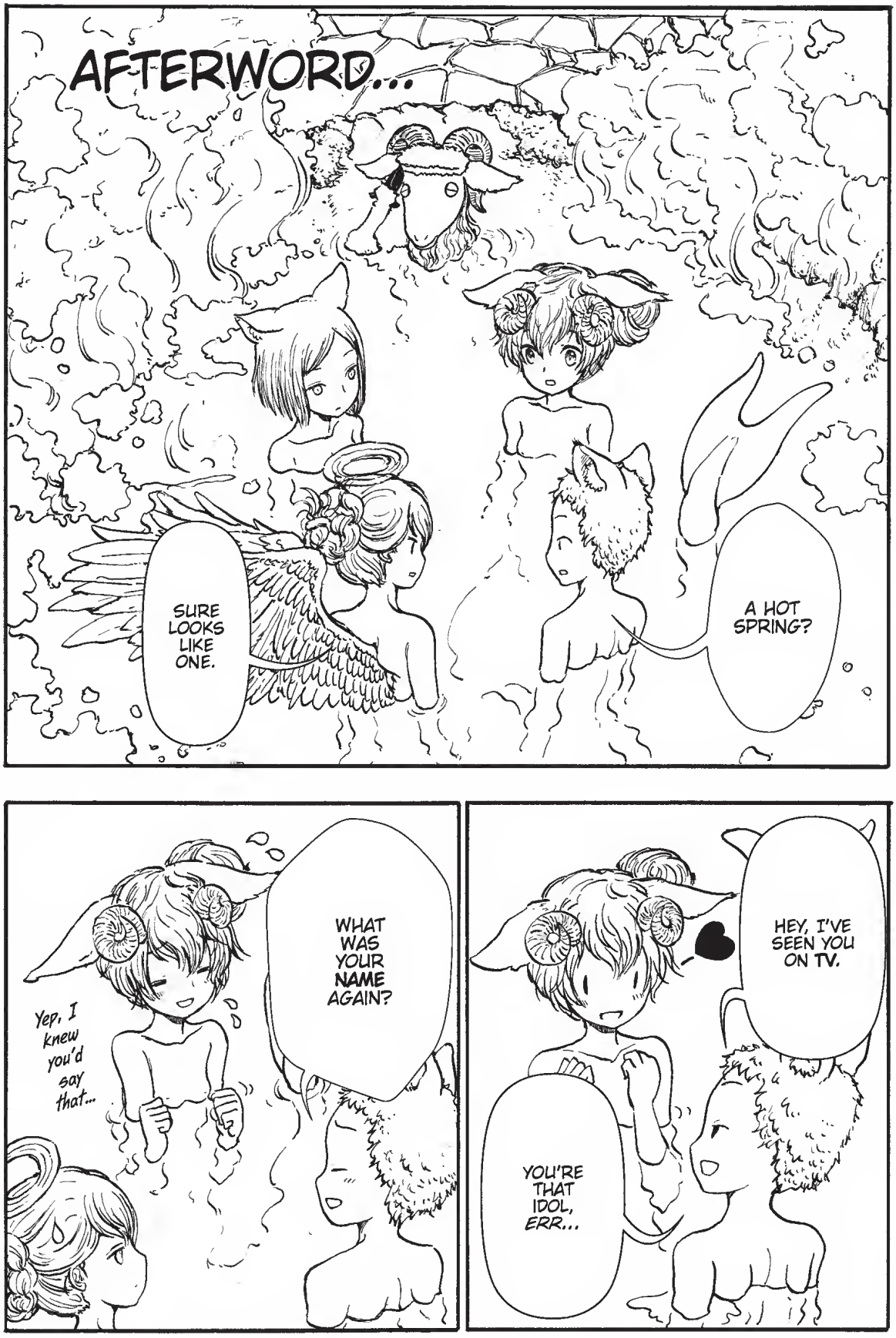

IF THE VOTES AREN'T EVER GOING TO CHANGE, WE SHOULD JUST ASSIGN EACH ACTIVITY ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF VOTES. SO LIKE, WE'D DO DODGEBALL SIX TIMES, SWIMMING FIVE TIMES, AND SO ON.
MEAN-ING?
SWIMMING 𝍸 𝍸 IIII
DODGEBALL 𝍸 𝍸 I
NAPPING II
BUT IT'S FAIRER THIS WAY, AND REFLECTS EVERY-BODY'S WISHES.
NO FAIR CHANGIN' THE RULES NOW!
YOU GUYS LOST, SO JUST SHUT UP AND ACCEPT IT!
WE DECIDED ON MAJORITY RULE!

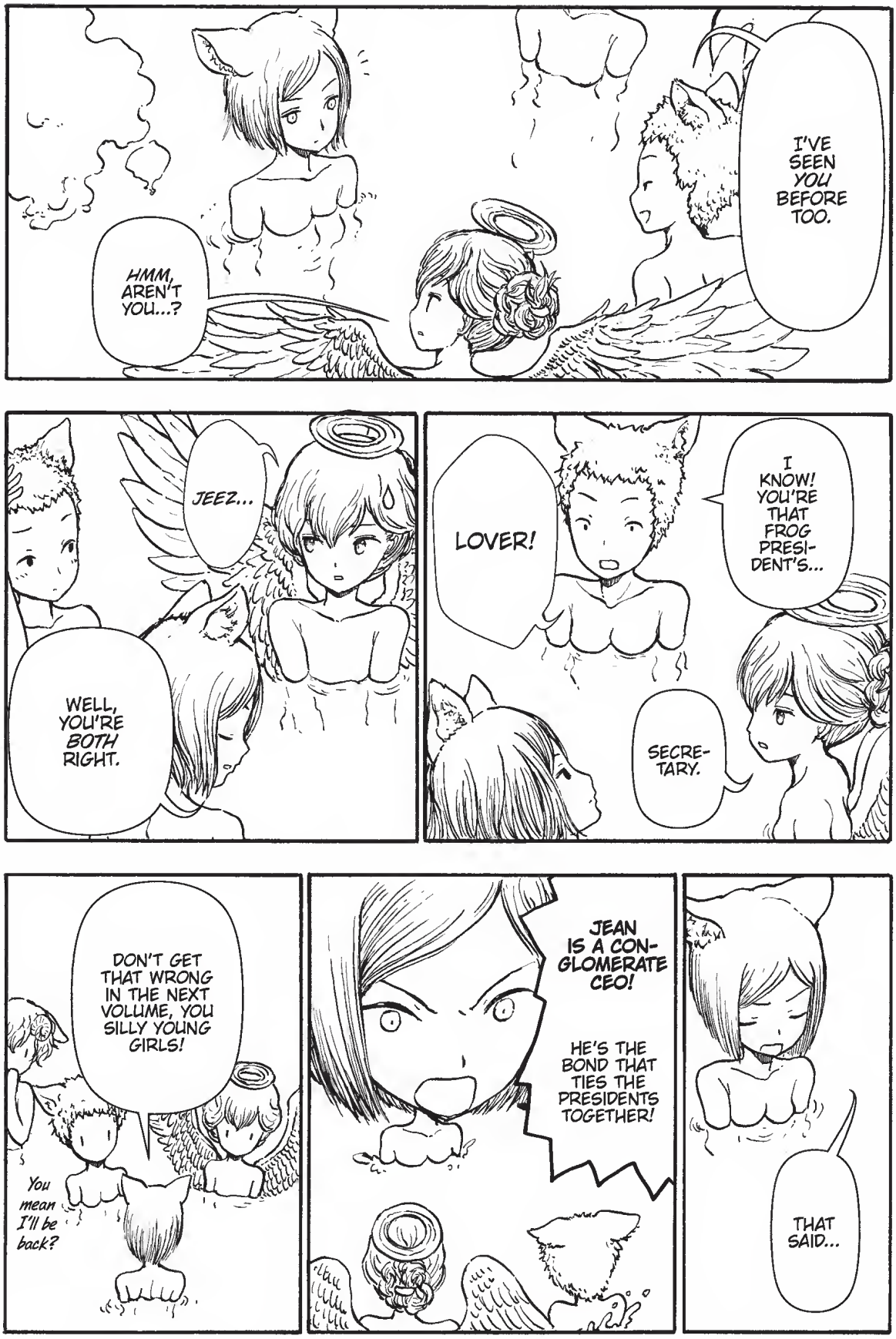

DENYING MAJORITY RULE IS THE SAME AS DENYING DEMOCRACY!
I WON'T GO ALONG WITH THAT!
THIS TIME, SURE.
BUT NEXT TIME, WE SHOULD DECIDE WITH A SYSTEM THAT REFLECTS WHAT THE MINORITY WANTS TOO.
DEMOCRATIC SPACE IS WARPING!


MAGICAL GIRL PRETTY HORN!!
POWER OF LOGIC, AWAKEN!
LAW AND LOGIC, BE MY GUIDES!
GRANT THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF HAPPINESS TO THE GREATEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE!


YOUR WARPED DEMOCRACY WON'T WORK ON ME!
EAT THIS! OSTRAKISMOS!
INVENTION IS THE PATH OF HUMAN PROGRESS.
UNDER-WATER DODGE-BALL, HUH? WHO'DA THUNK?
ARRGH ?!
Secret Vote!
NEXT TIME!
Illogical Democracy?!
Conspiracy Theory
Truth Science Society
MAKI-CHAN, DID YOU CLEAN UP?
AFTER THE PREVIEW!
She got the bad guy!
Shino, do you understand what's going on?

A CentaUr's Life


AFTERWORD...
A HOT SPRING?
SURE LOOKS LIKE ONE.
HEY, I'VE SEEN YOU ON TV.
YOU'RE THAT IDOL, ERR...
WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN?
Yep, I knew you'd say that...

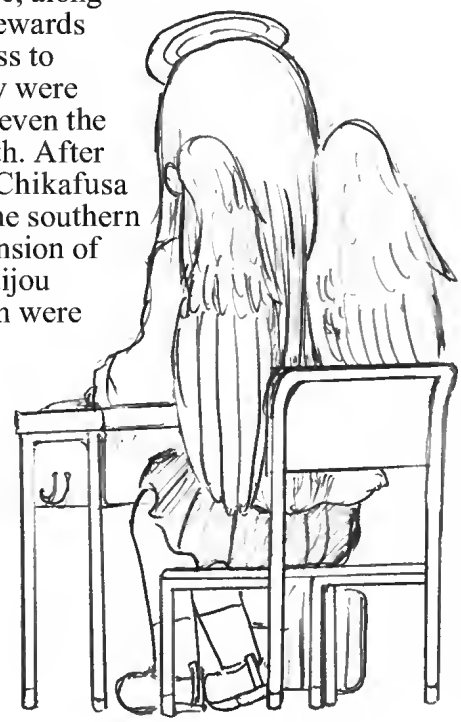

HMM, AREN'T YOU...?
I'VE SEEN YOU BEFORE TOO.
JEEZ...
WELL, YOU'RE BOTH RIGHT.
LOVER!
I KNOW! YOU'RE THAT FROG PRESI-DENT'S...
SECRE-TARY.
You mean I'll be back?
DON'T GET THAT WRONG IN THE NEXT VOLUME, YOU SILLY YOUNG GIRLS!
JEAN IS A CON-GLOMERATE CEO!
HE'S THE BOND THAT TIES THE PRESIDENTS TOGETHER!
THAT SAID...

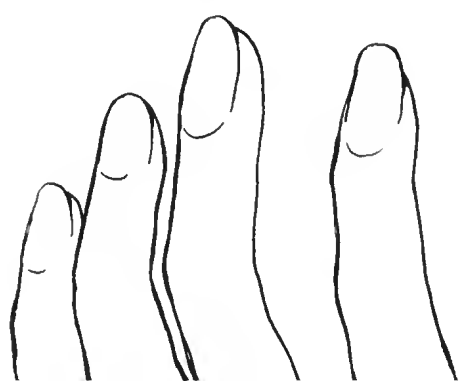
KANATA, NANCHOU'S KANTOU STRONGHOLD

As the Kemmu Restoration followed the demise of the Kamikura Bakufu, Oda Haruhisa, who reigned over the Kanata region, became more involved with the new government. In so doing, he aimed to reclaim the territory lost in the Houjou clan's advancement into Hidachi toward the end of the Kamikura era. However, this territory had been granted to the Ashikaga clan, prominent influencers of the new Bakufu, and was thus not reclaimed. Afterward, a breakdown in negotiations between the Emperor Go-Daigo and the Ashikaga led to an eruption of conflict between north and south imperial courts. The Oda aligned with the Emperor Go-Daigo in the southern court, engaging in fierce conflict with the Satake clan of the northern court.

The southern court dispatched the scholarly courtier Kitabatake Chikafusa to the east to provide support. Despite encountering violent rainstorms en route, Chikafusa successfully made his way to Hidachi, continually evading the Satake clan's attacks from the north and finally settling in at the Oda family stronghold, Oda castle (modern-day Kanata city). There, he scribed *Jinnou Shoutouki,* a book arguing the legitimacy of the southern court.

But due to the southern court's continued adherence to outdated aristocratic tradition and stance, along with their stingy distribution of material rewards such as land, and begrudging unwillingness to appoint soldiers to their desired posts, they were unable to garner support, to the point that even the Oda family eventually defected to the north. After roaming the southern regions of Hidachi, Chikafusa returned to Yoshino. The end product of the southern imperial court's struggles was a vast expansion of power and influence for the Satake and Daijou clans of the victorious north, both of whom were opposing forces to the Oda.





**In addition to being a historical text documenting history all the way from the Age of Gods to the late reign of Emperor Murakami, it also argued the legitimacy of the southern court through comparisons between the Imperial Household and foreign thrones. However, consequently to the text having been scribed in a fortress practically on the front lines of war, some information within has since been identified as inaccurate.*

CEASELESS CONFLICT SURROUND THE ODA CLAN AND KANATA REGION

Ashikaga Takauji set up a Bakufu in Kyoto Muromachi, as well as a Kamikura government in eastern Japan as an outpost to command that region, and appointed Motouji, still a child, to the post of Kamikura Shogun. Thereafter, the post of Shogun in the Kanto region was passed down hereditarily. The Kanto Shogun's aiding post of *Kanrei* was, in turn, passed down via the Uesugi family line on Takauji's mother's side. It was in this way that the Kamikura government was fleshed out into something which operated in much the same way as the Bakufu, and even the likes of the Kanata and Oda clans were eventually absorbed into its Shogunate structure.

The Oda family heir, Takatomo, fought in numerous battles. This time, he was on the Ashikaga side, eventually succeeding in restoring the old dominion. However, after a failed uprising on the part of Takatomo's son Gorou in aid of Oyama Wakainumaru, orphan to the Kanto government-opposing Oyama Yoshimasa, Takatomo would lose this domain once again.

Even after the north-south feuding drew to a close, infighting persisted within the Uesugi family, who dominated the post of Kanto *Kanrei,* while the Kamikura Shogun Ashikaga Mochiuji engaged in confrontation with former Kanto *Kanrei* Uesugi Zenshuu. Scattered conflicts persisted in the Eastern regions, each one causing a new clash between various Kanto generals, not least of which included the Oda clan. In Mochiuji's clash with Zenshuu, Oda Haruie took to Mochiuji's side, while Oda Mochiie sided with Zenshuu. After Zenshuu's defeat, Mochiuji clashed with Uesugi Norizane, resulting in the defeat of Mochiuji, whose orphaned sons were then adopted into the Oda clan and rose to arms alongside the Satake and Yuuki clans, ultimately ending in their defeat. Ashikaga Shigeuji relocated to Kanto and assumed the post of Kamikura Shogun, thereby putting himself in opposition to the Muromachi Bakufu and the Kanto *Kanrei.* He proceeded to murder Uesugi Norizane and move the shogunate headquarters to Koga. Two generations later, the Koga Shogun Takamoto would receive support from the Oda clan, though eventually they, too, would become adversaries.

In 1556, Oda Ujiharu battled with and was defeated by Ashikaga Takamoto, Yuuki Masakatsu, and Houjou Ujiyasu**, forcing him to abandon the Oda castle and retreat to the Tsuchiura castle. However, he later reconciled with the Houjou clan, allowing him to fight off the Yuuki's forces and reclaim the Oda stronghold.

This advance-and-retreat pattern at the Oda stronghold continued for some time thereafter. It is said that the Oda were able to reclaim their castle time and time again only due to the support they received from the local peoples. The fate of the Kanata region, once the heart of politics governing Hidachi, rested on the Oda clan.

***Of the Late Houjou clan. A prominent entity in Sengoku period lore that assumed Odawara as its base of operations and amassed forces in the Kanto region. Since they held no relation to the Houjou clan, which had held the position of regent within the Kamikura Bakufu for generations, they are distinguished through the addition of the "Late" prefix. The name "Houjou" was given by Ise Ujitsuna, son of the clan's founding father Ise Moritoki.*

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A Centaur's Life

story and art by **KEI MURAYAMA**

VOLUME 6

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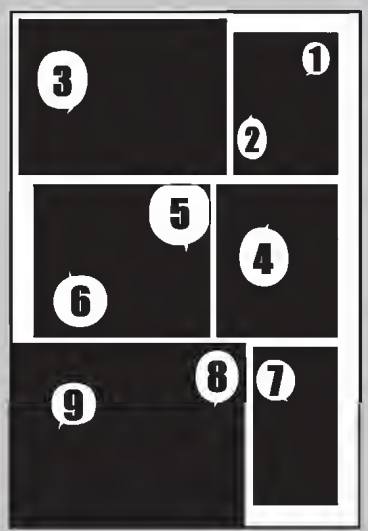
READING DIRECTIONS

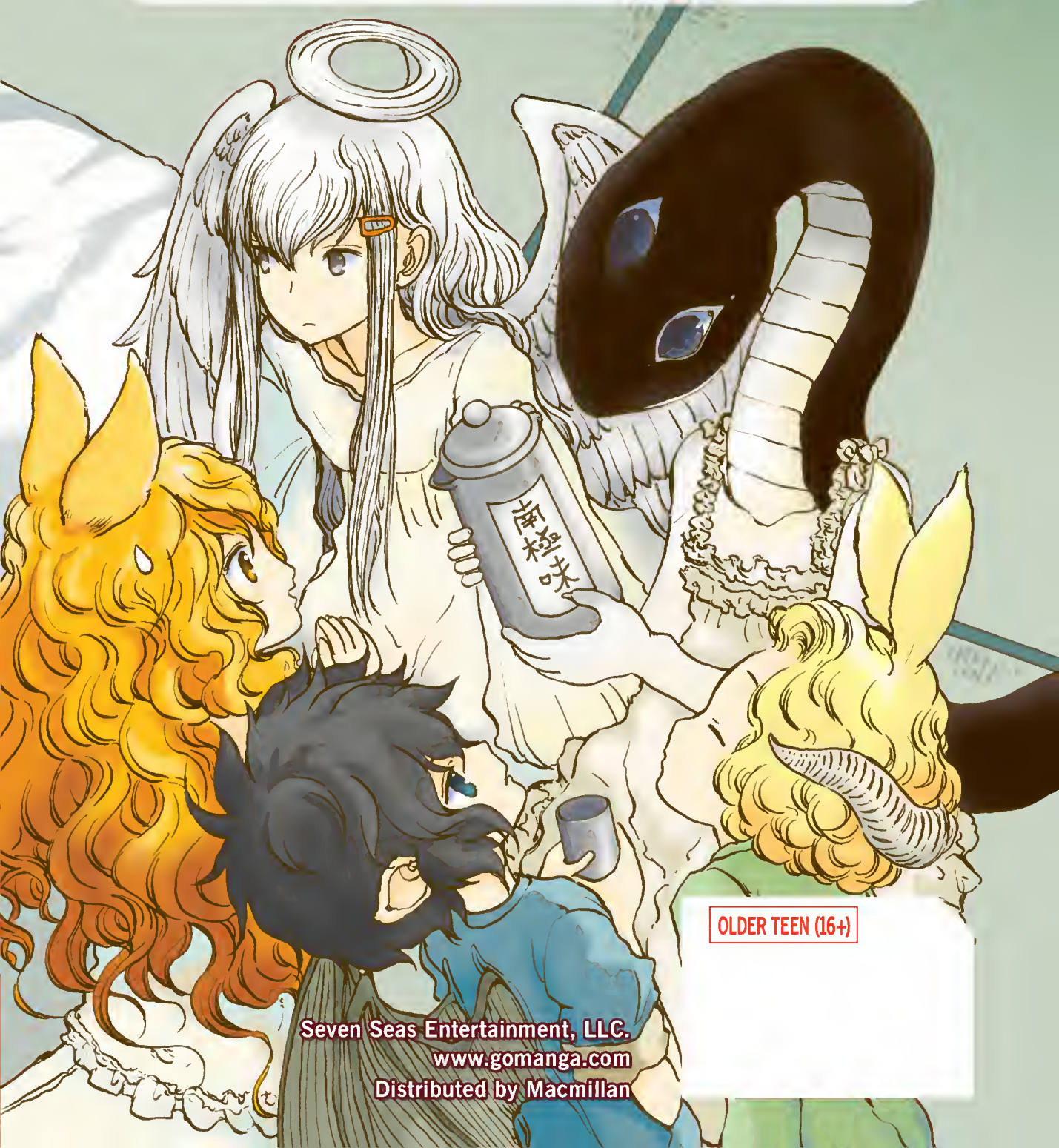
This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you□ll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



Hime and her friends meet an amphibian figure from the world of business. Meanwhile, they try to solve the mystery of a paranormal peeper! False gods interrupt a festival ceremony. Later, a shared dream only leads to more questions.

This is *A Centaur's Life!*

STRANGE, BUT TRUE.



OLDER TEEN (16+)

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